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# COLOUR BAR

PETER NIELSEN









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BY

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# THE COLOUR BAR

## I

### THE ORIGIN OF COLOUR PREJUDICE

THE white woman who gives herself to a black man is denounced by all of her own colour in Africa, but most loudly by those white men who have not themselves been faithful to their own race. For as in the beginning when the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair and took them wives of all which they chose so also in our own times when the sons of Europe descended upon Africa they often took concubines from among the Natives of the country but they never allowed their own women who followed them to mate with the men of the lesser breed. It was so also among the Natives before the whites came. From old Natives one may still hear of what befell some of the men of the tribes indigenous to the country that is now Rhodesia when they dared to aspire to the favours of women of the invading Matabele. I remember an old man with whom I had been discussing this subject who said sententiously as if the matter did not admit of any argument, "The women belong to the men who take the country, the men who are beaten can only take women of their own tribe." It has always been so. The men of the superior race have everywhere been quick to apprehend the danger of losing their women to the men of the race below, and it is this collective fear in white men to-day that must be counted first of the several kinds of fear

which together have formed the sustaining cause of that general attitude of the whites as a whole towards the Natives which has resulted in the setting up of the principle of the colour bar, the principle that white supremacy shall not be endangered by admitting the Natives to either political or social equality with the European inhabitants of Africa.

Although by the application of that principle sexual intercourse between white men and Native women has now also come to be universally condemned we still find that when white men live in Native territories away from the society of white women they take naturally to cohabitation with Native women without feeling that they thereby commit treason against their own kind, but that when they hear of a white woman having become the wife or mistress of a black man, however civilized or educated he may be, they react as one man to what they feel to be an outrage against them all.

It would be easy for me to give many instances from my own observation as evidence of this diorism but, having regard to the need for brevity, I shall cite only a few. One day, some years ago, I happened to be together with a number of men in the bar-room of a small hotel in one of the mining camps of Rhodesia when a Native man and a white woman came walking past the verandah arm in arm. Although it was known to all the men in the place that the couple were legally married and that they were both respectable servants of the manager of one of the mines in the district, the sight instantly caused strong feeling to be voiced, and one of the company swore that he would there and then go and "teach the bloody nigger to leave white women to white men." So saying he strode out and when he had overtaken the pair he attacked the man briskly with his



fists but, contrary to his expectations, he soon proved himself unequal to the task he had taken upon himself so that he had to retreat in some haste to the sheltering company of his friends where he received appropriate consolation.

Knowing as I did that this man, as well as most of the other men in the room, was at that time keeping a Native woman of his own more or less openly I could not help laughing, but I remember that none of the others laughed with me; they were all too full of indignation to see anything to laugh at in what had happened. They discussed gravely the error, as they held it, of the Government allowing a black man to marry a white woman, but no one said anything about the Government's toleration of the cohabitation of white men with black women.

Soon after this an incident occurred in the main town which also illustrates the distinction that is made in this matter by white men between themselves and white women.

Two white prostitutes, who lived together in a small house, were reported to have failed to observe the colour-line, which even in their profession is insisted upon by the whites in Africa, wherefore it was decided that these women should undergo the punishment of being tarred and feathered deemed fitting in such cases, and so thoroughly was this done that the unfortunate creatures had to run stark naked, save for the feathers plastered down their backs, to the central police station where the officer on duty took pity on them and gave them some rags to cover themselves with while they were being escorted back to their place admonishing them at the same time to behave themselves in future and not to forget to draw the colour-line where it ought to be drawn.

The man who told me this story had been one of the punishing company, and he made it clear that they had

all felt that as God had created white women for white men it was the plain duty of every self-respecting white man to honour that divine dispensation.

Not only the white men typified in these instances, who form the great majority of the male white population in Africa, but even those white men who by their professions are committed to the spreading of the doctrine of universal brotherhood have in them no less than the rest this elemental fear of black rivalry.

At a certain mission station "somewhere in Africa" it happened not long ago that the sister of the missionary in charge allowed herself to fall in love very thoroughly with a Native convert, a presentable and intelligent young man, who, needless to say, felt greatly flattered at the distinction conferred on him, and as the lady was possessed of much determination but little discretion she refused to be dissuaded by her brother from her purpose to marry the Native who, as she argued, was not inferior to a white man in the sight of God.

Now, while the good missionary could not as such dispute the impartiality of the Deity in regard to all human beings which is postulated by the Christian religion, he felt, nevertheless, very strongly that as a white man he had to draw the line at marriage between a black man and a white woman, and he therefore decided that to augment the effect of his prayers for the deliverance of his misguided sister he would make use of a show of force, not against her, for he knew that that would be of no avail, but against her lover. He accordingly armed himself with a shotgun and a number of cartridges filled with salt instead of shot, and in the evening when the young man was returning to his quarters after his usual walk with the white lady the man of peace, waiting in the dark by the side of the



path, shot off all his ammunition so quickly and effectively that the terrified youth fled far away whence he has not yet returned.

As this missionary felt so feel all his brethren. He had been ready always to help the black man upward towards equality with his white masters regardless of the barriers set by them against such progress, but when the black man reached out to possess himself of a white woman the white missionary felt himself compelled by something stronger than his creed to frustrate the attempt; the white missionary had been eager to accept the black man as his brother in Christ but he could not accept him as his brother-in-law.

In South Africa fear of the black man was indeed natural enough in the small numbers of white newcomers surrounded as they were by vast hordes of hostile savages, but to-day it is no longer that kind of fear that has to be reckoned with; to-day the fear that gnaws at the heart of white South Africa is the fear not of hostility from overwhelming numbers of savage black men but of friendliness and intimacy between civilized black men and white women.

It is clear that cohabitation of white men with black women could not have created this fear as now manifested. Such cohabitation has, as everyone knows, been common enough in many places in the past and has only been generally condemned by the whites in comparatively recent times. Where white men were living without their own women in the midst of black people there could be none of those feelings of fear and animosity that are roused in the dominant males when they begin to apprehend danger of rivalry from the men of another race or kind which they regard as inferior to their own.

To-day this collective fear in white men seen here

as the root-cause of the whole attitude and disposition of the whites generally towards the Natives is not recognized by many people as such because it has been masked by the rationalization which represents it as the result of a reasoned apprehension in all white people, men and women, of loss of their civilization through intermarriage with the mentally inferior black people following from close contact and unfair economic competition. The fear, therefore, of which the whites as a whole are conscious to-day is the fear of losing their racial superiority by the mixing of their blood with that of the aboriginals of Africa.

That the Natives are and must remain mentally inferior to the whites has been accepted as self-evident so long by the great majority of people that it may now hardly be questioned; nevertheless there are some who feel doubtful about this commonly alleged mental inferiority of the Natives, and who for that reason profess not to apprehend any biological deterioration through miscegenation itself though they do not wish to hide their fear of the lowering of the whole level of European life and civilization in Africa through such mingling with the Native people who must of necessity continue for a long time to live on a level much below that to which the white race as a whole has raised itself; in other words, the fear entertained by this small minority of whites is fear of the loss of social and cultural status rather than fear of racial deterioration.

But however the reasons for the several fears may be assigned the fact remains that the general fear in the whites is not now of the enmity of the African but of his friendliness, seeing that it is recognized by all that as an open enemy he can be kept in subjugation but that as a close friend and neighbour his claim to full equality with

his present masters may soon prove irresistible. This, of course, is not to deny the possibility of hostility from disaffected Natives in the future, but enemies without arms, however brave and numerous, need hardly be feared by those who have at hand large, well-organised and fully armed forces wherewith to oppose them.

Fear, then, of our black fellow man as a competitor and rival, if not as a potential enemy, we see to be the continuing cause of the whole situation which has come to be recognized as the Native Problem. But fear of our fellow men we have been taught to suspect as a wrong motive for any kind of collective action against them, a sinful feeling to be cast out and replaced by perfect love. Yet some sort of collective fear would seem to be necessary for continuous collective existence, and herein ancient theologians and modern biologists are agreed. "Fear of hell," said St. Augustine, "shall fill heaven," and some fear of physical danger, our scientists tell us, is necessary to keep the bodily organs healthy and active so as to avoid untimely physical dissolution. May we not therefore accept it as a plausible analogy that fear of the kind we are here considering may also have survival value for the separate groups or races whose separate continuance would on that assumption appear to be a natural desideratum?

However we may think about this we are bound to admit that whereas the fear of the fiend called god or devil that has plagued mankind from the earliest times is now slowly passing from civilized society, the fear of man, the man who is different from ourselves, the yellow, the brown and the black man, is growing stronger with the advance of civilization, and, as Shakespeare, who was a competent psychologist before that word was invented, has well said: "In time we hate that which we



often fear." Of this we have indeed the fullest proof nowadays in the spread of the various phobias that are being preached in the names of patriotism and pride of race as never before.

Negrophobia might well be suggested as the word wherewith to denote the white man's prevailing fear of his black brother were it not that hardly any white person in Africa will be found ready to admit that this general apprehension of the results of admitting the Natives to political and social equality with the whites can possibly be called inordinate or unwarranted, and, seeing that it is our purpose to examine here the grounds on which it is commonly sought to justify that apprehension it is clearly undesirable to use words which in themselves convey reproach before we have come to the end of our discussion.

In the studying of all large social questions we must consider not only the weight of the arguments by which the prevailing beliefs and opinions are supported; we must consider also the weight of the numbers of those who make use of those arguments for, as Voltaire said, "One cannot be cleverer than everybody."

Now, if the average white man in Africa, the man of average intelligence who may be taken to represent the great bulk of the European inhabitants, is asked to state precisely what it is that he fears in the Native he will be pretty sure to reply more or less to the effect, as I have already suggested, that he is not afraid of the Native as a present or even as a potential enemy but that he fears the competition and the general mixing up of the Natives with the whites, a state of things which, as it seems to him, must, if not prevented, inevitably bring about the ruin of the white race in Africa. "Equality between Black and White means the end of the white



man," he will declare, as one who asserts the incontrovertible, and, indeed, he will seldom meet with contradiction.

If our witness is then told that in so saying he has not answered but only begged the question he will, as a rule, go on to quote as many as he can remember of those physical and alleged mental differences between the two races which are commonly believed to denote the inferiority against whose racial menace the whites must ever be prepared.

We shall now proceed to examine the full list of these allegations in the light of whatever scientific or verifiable information may be available, and, seeing that the physical differences are obvious to all and not in themselves to be proved we may conveniently consider first the allegations of inferiority that refer to them before we attempt the more difficult task of dealing with the evidence of mental and moral differences which has been tendered from time to time to show that black people must of necessity remain always unfit to mix or mate with white people on terms of equality.

Being no longer young I am under no illusion that complete logical refutation, were it possible, of all the allegations of racial inferiority in the Native must bring about the withdrawal of those allegations. I am old enough to know that human nature, whether in Europeans or Africans, is governed by passion rather than by reason, and that man, civilized or uncivilized, white or black, believes best what he wants to believe so that the belief that is most flattering to himself or his particular kind is always the most lasting because the least open to argument. The satisfaction, moreover, which men of all races and in all stages of culture find in group-feeling and group-action, whatever may be the

true explanation of it, is largely independent of reason, as we see in the general and almost blind acceptance in many places to-day of the notion that a general consciousness of particular racial superiority is in itself a necessary condition for the progress of the particular race or group, and therefore not to be questioned.

Yet, despite these warnings of experience and observation I still feel that, like those who continue to invoke the hitherto unavailing authority of reason against the shameful stupidity of modern war, we who by the fact of our assumption of control are vitally concerned in the settlement of the great issue between white and black in Africa must also continue to uphold the arbitrament of reason against the clamour of passion and prejudice even if we fare no better than those who in the past trusted in the power of persuasion when reason herself told them that their trust was not well-founded.

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## II

### PHYSICAL DIFFERENCES

THE odour of the African Native must, I think, be counted first as the most fundamental and important of the several physical characteristics that differentiate him from the white man seeing that, unlike his facial appearance and the colour of his skin, it is likely to remain unaffected by the changes in his environment which are now being brought about by European civilization so that it will continue to be as obtrusively perceptible as it now is to the European sense of smell which, judging from the experience so far gained, cannot be made tolerant of it by habituation. For this opinion I cannot claim support from the anthropologists, for in none of their books with which I am acquainted have I seen this odour mentioned as a definitive index of the African race, but the great majority of white people in Africa will, I feel sure, agree with me in placing it first on the list of physical differences between the two races.

To most Europeans this odour is more or less unpleasant just as the smell of Europeans is not pleasant to many Africans, and if it is true, as we have always been taught, that an offensive odour is to be accepted as a provision of nature for preventing close contact then the mingling of people of two widely separated races who are reciprocally obnoxious in respect of the most elemental of their five senses must be contrary to the ordination of nature and therefore not to be permitted.



To those who regard miscegenation as the greatest danger to white South Africa this might well seem a good and useful argument were it not for the fact that this scent of the Natives, which has been compared by some early travellers to the smell of the female crocodile while others have found it similar to that of the male gorilla, has not, whatever it may or may not signify, hitherto been strong enough to prevent white men of all classes from finding pleasure in continued close contact with black women.

May we conclude that the sexual impulse overrides the olfactory antipathy and thus disproves the suggestion of biological value in racial odour? The attraction which white women have for black men is undeniable, for we see how it often proves irresistible in spite of the heavy hand of the white man's law loaded against the black trespasser. I am not here referring to the constantly occurring cases of *crimen injuria*, as the various breaches of female privacy are styled in South Africa, which are often caused by nothing more serious than illicit curiosity. I am referring to the frequent and determined attempts made by Native men to gratify their lust after white women in places where Native women are not scarce; assaults committed by civilized and uncivilized Native men alike with full knowledge of the penalty of death that awaits the black man who has been found guilty of rape of a white woman. From what I have seen and heard of these things I am able to say that the protestation so often made for and by the educated Natives that they harbour no desire for white women but are content always with their own is at best a pious lie not to be seriously believed.

We see, therefore, that the mutual olfactory aversion we are here considering, real and important as it un-



doubtedly is, is nevertheless not sufficiently strong to outweigh the attraction which the women of each race have for the men of the other, so that it seems hardly possible to regard it as having been provided by nature as a signal of warning against the mixing of the blood of the two races.

That there are some white people who in sweating exude an odour similar to that of the Natives is a relevant fact which should not be overlooked, and I think also that we may regard the now so generally professed aversion in Europeans from all odour of the sweat of a healthy person of their own or of another race as an exaggeration prompted by present-day fashion rather than as a confession of natural repugnance, for the sweat of the normal European body can hardly be naturally repugnant to normal European nostrils especially as there is evidence to show that it sometimes serves to enhance sexual attraction. We need not, therefore, be wholly persuaded by the present-day advertisements of cunningly named simples against all body-odour in which it is alleged that the modern gentleman is possessed of a sense of smell so highly developed that even a slight degree of body-odour in a young lady otherwise entirely desirable will make it impossible for him to contemplate marriage with her.

It is no doubt true that people who take daily hot baths tend to become more intolerant of the smell of sweat in old and dirty clothes, such as the clothes most Natives wear, than are those who have not acquired that habit, but that sort of smell is not to be taken for the essential smell of the Native himself which even in the civilized Native, who has learned to keep his body and his clothes clean, is often so strong as to make his presence in a European house well-nigh insufferable. Scrupulous

cleanliness of the body and frequent washing of the clothes will undoubtedly do much to mitigate the characteristic Native smell, but it cannot be denied that there are many Natives for whom the most constant and conscientious application of hot water and soap will be of no avail, and it is the not inconsiderable section made up of those individuals that will continue to provide the main warrant for the white man's colour bar in the form of the argument that where nature herself has made close physical association intolerable there can be no true equality.

All things considered, it seems to me that this racial odour of the African Native will remain the most destructive of the physical characteristics of his race and as such figure always as a factor of first importance against him not because it can be proved to be in any way an indication of racial inferiority but because it will continue to serve as useful material for the maintenance of the barrier which the whites have erected to arrest the feared advance of the blacks towards racial equality with themselves.

The African face is also commonly regarded by the whites as bearing evidence of a closer relationship with the anthropoid apes than the European, and from this the twofold conclusion is generally drawn that this comparatively simian appearance accounts for the aversion from close contact with Natives which so many Europeans profess to feel, and that it also denotes that the African's capacity for human progress cannot be as good as that of the European. Plausible as this argument may seem it hardly carries conviction when closely examined.

I have in mind, as I write, a certain Native of my acquaintance whose face is typical of the faces of a large number of Natives. In this face the flat nose and the

long upper lip curving over the front teeth, reminds one strongly of a chimpanzee, but this man, so far from showing signs of being in any way sub-human, has proved himself possessed of qualities that have enabled him to rise from the state of naked and primitive existence into which he was born up to the level where it became possible for him to obtain a university degree, an achievement which, faced as he was with a strongly adverse home-environment, must have entailed greater capacity for sustained effort—one of the most specifically human endowments—than would be required of the most determined European youth pursuing his studies within the favourable environment of European civilization.

Against this particular inference of racial inferiority I would also cite the fact, speaking from my own experience, that those Natives who have comparatively refined features, derived probably from Arabian invaders in the past, of whom there are many in the Eastern parts of Rhodesia, do not show any degree of mental or spiritual superiority over their coarse-featured fellows, indeed, it has seemed to me that most of those of my Native acquaintances who have shown marked intelligence have been of the pure black kind without any trace of foreign admixture in their faces. To take the face, African or European, as an index of the mentality of its owner is, indeed, far from safe. I have known men with coarse and heavy features who have been men of intelligence and of sensitive nature, and I have met with women possessed of the most refined features who have seemed to me sadly lacking in mental sensibility. Popular novelists, no doubt, as a rule support the notion that certain features indicate certain mental or moral characteristics: the thin lips that betoken cruelty in the villain, and the full lips that are a sure sign of sensuality



in the bad woman of the story, but popular novelists cannot be called on to verify the popular notions which it is part of their business to exploit.

As to the aversion from close contact with Natives which undoubtedly exists in very many, if not in most, Europeans I believe that it is a feeling which is always inculcated from without and that it is in no sense inborn or instinctive.

An American physician once told me that although he had not much belief in the common allegation of African racial inferiority he had to confess that he had a strong sense of aversion from black men but that he thought this feeling might be explained by his having been once, as a child, thoroughly frightened by an old negro whose features, as he remembered them, had been intensely hideous in their brutish coarseness. The sight of this old man, he said, had made a deep impression on him, and he had been conscious ever since of a feeling of uneasiness and revulsion whenever he had found himself near black men, especially if they were old men. He admitted, however, in answer to a question from me, that he had not been conscious of this feeling when he had happened to be near young negro women.

I believe that if we could examine fully all such cases we should find that they could be explained by certain events that occurred in childhood or, more generally, by tuition, direct or by way of association of ideas, received during early years. We know, for instance, that many white people have been led in childhood to associate a black skin with "the sooty fiend, foul and hateful," and we know how tenaciously early associations of ideas cling to us through life.

The desire to see their prejudices justified by "facts" often lead even apparently intelligent people to accept



as good evidence what is only misunderstood information. Especially welcome is such information if it can be quoted as having come from a scientific source. One has heard, for instance, of late of the chromosomes in the body of the Native having been found by "doctors" to be less in number than those with which the European's body is endowed, also of the blood in the African's veins being different from the blood that courses through the veins of the white man, and these alleged differences are commonly cited with the confidence born of ignorance as supporting the cherished notion that there is a physical basis for the not-to-be doubted mental superiority of the whites. However guarded the men of science may be in their scientific utterances the uninstructed public will generally contrive to give currency to versions of those utterances very different from what they really were. The biologists of to-day do not say that the chromosomes in the Native are fewer than those in the European nor do they say that the blood of the Native is generically different from the blood of white people.

There would appear to be no scientific authority for believing either that the features of the African's face or the bones of his body indicate a lesser evolutionary position than that reached by the European; indeed, it has been found recently by competent students, using accepted criteria, that the limb-proportions indices of African skeletons show that the Bushman is less simian than both the Bantu and the European, and that, in turn, the Bantu is less simian than the European. But such evidence, being contrary to that desired, is seldom remembered. Even simple facts that are open to the eyes of all without the aid of scientific training, when they seem to cast doubt upon the claim made for the white

man as being the highest type of human animal evolved, are as a rule conveniently forgotten.

Thus there is the fact that whereas extreme hairiness of body is exceedingly common in the European male it is very rarely seen in the Bantu. I remember how shocked I was when, as a boy, I once went bathing with a very hirsute doctor of divinity, a most learned European; since then I have seen many white men matted like him with hair on chest and shoulders but I have never seen a Native of Africa bearing on his body such strong evidence of man's lowly origin.

Again, the texture of the African's hair is less like the hair of the man-like apes than the hair of the European, resembling as it does the wool of the sheep, a fact that has often enabled Negro preachers to enliven their congregations by applying it to the biblical parable of the sheep and the goats.

Yet, again, if there is anything in the so-called god-like erectness of the human carriage then the African Natives, who in their uncivilized state move with admirable ease and grace, must surely be placed in this respect as far as the Europeans from the shambling hair-covered creatures to which all mankind is supposed to be distantly related.

The colour of the Native's skin is admittedly nearer to the colour of the primates than the colour of the skin of the Northern European, but the skin itself of the Native is usually finer and more pleasant to the touch than that of the European, a fact which explains the origin of the cognomen "Black velvet" in South Africa for the Native concubine of a white man; and to those white people who have not been conditioned during childhood or adolescence to feel, or to profess to feel, repugnance at the sight or touch of the unclothed

African body it is often found to be very pleasing, certainly in no way suggestive of any lower degree of human bodily status than the nude European body. In fact, I have often heard white men who have kept Native women say that they have found the black or deep-brown colour of the Native woman far more beautiful than the dead-white skin of the white woman, and I have also heard white women of culture and refinement admit that the black or dark-brown torso and limbs of the African man have seemed to them at times a more pleasing sight than the stark white limbs and body of the European male.

Health and the appearance of fitness for the duties relative to the sex of the body are the elements that constitute its beauty in the eyes of the unsophisticated beholder, and these requisites are found alike among black people and white. It is when age and disease have left their marks on the face and body that these, whether black or white, cease to be beautiful in themselves. To be able to see in the face of ripe age, as Jesus, the son of Zirach, saw in it, a beauty as of the clear light shining upon the holy candlestick, is not given to the common man any more than is the power of uttering fine thoughts in simple words. Only the poet within an advanced civilization will be able to find beauty in such abstractions as holiness, character, dignity; but even the common man may sometimes recognize in the faces of old Native men and women both dignity and graciousness.

There remains to be considered yet one more of the stock notions or beliefs that are currently quoted to show that the present inferiority of the African race is the result of bodily or physical disability and therefore bound to be permanent, the notion that, as commonly expressed, the Native's skull is much thicker than the



skull of the white man, and that this accounts for the Native being the thick-headed fellow he is. The brain of the Native, so runs the argument, simply cannot expand because it has no room to do so. Surgeons, however, who speak from first-hand observation, deny that there is any evidence to show that the Native skull is thicker than the European skull. That the thick mat of woolly hair with which the heads of most Natives are covered may account for the comparative immunity from head-injuries with which they are commonly credited is not thought worth mentioning nor is it explained why the bones of the Native cranium should extend inward rather than outward. Support for the belief in the alleged disparity is also seen by some in the further belief, supposed to have scientific authority, that the sutures of the skull close at an earlier age in the Native than they do in the European thus causing the arrest of the growth of the brain to take place earlier in the Native than in the European.

Modern surgeons do not authorize this deduction; they say that if the sutures of the Native skull close at a somewhat earlier date in the average Native than in the average Northern European this simply means that the average Native reaches maturity slightly earlier than the average European of the Nordic type.

The loss of mental alertness that is observed in many, if not in all, Native boys and girls at the onset of puberty is, plausibly enough, cited as showing that the inhibition of mental development caused by the too early closing of the cranial sutures leaves the lower propensities of sex which human beings share with the animals comparatively free to dominate, and that this accounts for the pronounced falling off in intelligence and the lack of willingness to learn observed at the beginning of



adolescence in Natives. But that this is not a sound proposition is shown by the fact that the same supervening condition is very often met with in European boys and girls at the same stage of life. Competent observers have of late years come to the conclusion that this apparent falling off in intelligence is to be regarded rather as a transference of interests, and that in so far as it may differ in degree in the Native from what is so often observed in the European it is due to environment, using that word in its broadest sense, and not to physiological causes. It is being realized that in the European adolescent this lapse is to a great extent prevented by the force of example and by the fear of parental and general reprobation coupled with unbroken school discipline or apprenticeship, all of which factors are as yet largely absent from the environment of the ordinary Bantu boy and girl, environment which in many Native tribes includes such customs as the one which demands that the girls, when they approach nubility, shall by frequent manipulation cause a certain development of their genital parts in which practice they are often assisted by young boys. Such customs which, needless to say, are not regarded by those who follow them as being immoral, must naturally tend to centre interest in matters of sex at the expense of irksome school-lessons at the time when the sexual impulses begin to make themselves felt. But even where such direct excitation does not find place, as in European schools where boys and girls are taught together, we find that the teachers are often hard put to it to prevent the awakening instincts of sex from ousting for the time being the needed interest in study.

The foregoing will, I think, have made it clear that there is no good reason for believing, as so many people

profess to believe, that certain outward or bodily differences between Europeans and Natives indicate racial inferiority in the latter, but there is still the argument which may conveniently be discussed at this stage that as the Natives of Africa have never achieved anything in the way of civilization at all comparable with the achievements of the natives of Europe or the natives of Asia they must suffer from a lack of innate capacity for high cultural progress, and, seeing that the required capacity must lie in the brain, their deficiency must be in the quantity or quality, or both in the quantity and quality, of their cerebral equipment. The average white man in Africa will not believe that the Native is quite the same sort of man as himself. "The Native," he will say, "is not my equal and never will be; his skull may be like mine, but what I have inside my head is different from what he has inside his or else why am I where I am and he where he is?" It is a weighty argument, this argument from achievement, deserving of our careful consideration.

It has long been known to science that there is a correlation between the size of the brain and the number of cells and fibres of which it is made up although this correlation is so weak as to be difficult of demonstration. Skull capacity, it has been found, varies far more closely with physical characteristics—height, weight, age, sex, race—than with mental characteristics, so that, for instance, the brain of a great European philosopher of small stature might well be considerably smaller than that of a big-bodied Zulu. And although the size of the brain when looked at broadly does seem to be connected with the taxonomic rank of the race, when we come to details the connection between cranial capacity and mental endowment becomes less obvious. The Eskimo, for in-



stance, who is short of stature, has a cranial capacity of 1,500 cubic centimetres, thus surpassing some of the most civilized peoples in Europe, and yet no one of this race has so far startled the world with any great mental achievement. It will therefore be seen that although the skull capacity of the average African is smaller than that of the average European it is not thereby to be proved that the mental capability of the African is on the average smaller than that of the average European.

As to the supposition that there may be a difference of quality between the European and the African brain to which the comparative lack of performance in the Native may be ascribed it has to be said that physiologists generally have led us to understand that it has not yet been found possible even by the closest examination of all the features of a brain to say that its owner has reached this or that status, but recently evidence has been produced from a scientific quarter giving at least tentative support for the notion of a qualitative deficiency in the African brain. Trained observers in East Africa have stated that the results of their observations show that the cortex of the Native brain is fifteen per cent. less than the European and that its cells are smaller, less well-formed and less well-arranged than those of the European; also, that although there is no reduction in the number of cells in any given area the Native cortex shows predominance of undifferentiated cells.

This evidence, however, has not been accepted by authoritative physiologists; on the contrary, it has been doubted by most and rejected by some of the eminent scientists for whose opinion it has been submitted.

Nevertheless it would seem to the intelligent layman that something like a *prima facie* case has been made out which should be submitted for scientific proof. To get



the proof of science it would be necessary to show by the evidence of large numbers of post-mortem examinations that the percentage of good-sized cortices in Natives is actually only fifteen per cent. of the European average, and to show also that the degree of the paucity of the so-called good-looking neurons in any brain whether of a European or Native is incompatible with the possession of good intelligence by its owner.

If after such research-work had been carried out in the approved scientific manner it were proved that only a small proportion of the members of the African race in each generation had brains as good as those of the average European then there would be sound reason for holding that the black race as a whole is permanently inferior to the European in capability for mental effort and as such incapable of progress equal to that of the whites, for we can hardly doubt that the progress of culture must depend not only upon favourable climate and stimulating environment but also upon the numbers of men and women in the community possessed of the necessary mental equipment for making that response to the environmental stimuli which, as we assume, is the origin of all cultural advance.

The instances I propose to cite from my own experience in the following chapter to illustrate what I have taken to be the capability of the average Native mind will show why I, for one, find it difficult to believe that the required proof will be forthcoming.

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### III

#### AFRICAN INTELLIGENCE

THE backward Boers of the backveld and the raw Natives of the kraals are alike primitive people, but the educated white man, when he begins to philosophize about the Native question, thinks he can see a difference between primitive whites and primitive blacks. The admitted primitive condition of a section of his own race in Africa he knows to be only a temporary state which can be altered by education within the time of one or two generations, whereas the primitiveness of the Natives he conceives to be the result of an inherent lack of capacity for continuous cultural progress. The Native, therefore, according to this view is to be regarded as being primitive not only in the sense of being lacking in culture or civilization but as being lacking also in essential human complexity, a creature that goes guided by instincts rather than by reason; in other words, the Native of Africa is to be regarded as a being not quite so far removed in the scale of evolution from the animal relatives of modern man as is the Native of Europe, and is therefore to be held unfitted for ever to attain to equality with the white man.

To examine this belief, which has become the racial creed of white South Africa, it will be necessary now to consider in turn each of the most commonly made allegations of specific mental inferiority on the part of the Natives on which that belief is based in order to see

whether these allegations can be verified by satisfactory evidence.

Most of the whites think they have more intelligence than the Natives, and the Natives, with few exceptions, think so too. Among all the Bantu tribes with which I have come in personal contact there is a myth to explain this disparity which seems to the Natives too patent to be doubted. In the beginning, so runs the story, all the peoples of the earth were together in the reeds, as the fabled place of human origin is called, but the black people, being unwilling to continue in that place and learn what was being taught there, broke loose and came forth untaught into the outer world long before the white people who, having greater patience, stayed where they were till they had learned all the lessons which have made them as clever as they are.

Those who believe that the African Natives are inferior to the whites in all that comes under the name of intelligence will be quick to perceive significance in the consistency of this myth with the notion which has been entertained in some scientific quarters that the black pigmentation of the Negroid stock indicates that that stock separated from the common *Homo Sapiens* stem earlier than the two other main stocks, the Caucasoid and the Mongoloid, but first-hand experience of dealing with African Natives in the way of labour would cause those who have it to doubt the soundness of the implication of particular venturesomeness as being characteristic of Natives though the same experience would support the admission of lack of patience in them of the kind that is needed for continuous study.

It is not only the raw or untutored Natives who accept the fact of their lack of civilization as conclusive evidence of lack of intelligence. Many of the Natives who have



come under missionary influence and have had some schooling have also come to believe that as sons of Ham, of whom they have been told, they have been denied the full measure of cleverness with which the whites have been blessed, and that they have thus been condemned to remain servants of servants for ever. And even from the educated members of the African race in America a voice to which most white people will attach significance has recently been heard to declare that the African is too radically different from the white man in his mental and emotional structure to be more than a spurious and uneasy imitation of him if he persists in his present desire to imitate the white man and his ways.

This impressive array of opinion notwithstanding I dare to avow my belief, formed not from what I have read of Natives but from what I have learned through close contact with them during the greater part of a lifetime, that in their innate capacity for rational thinking and for the experiencing of all kinds of human emotion the African Natives are in no way different from the members of the great Nordic race to which I happen to belong.

That large numbers of Natives are dull-witted is not to be doubted, for the stupid Native is everywhere in evidence, and his stupidity is often crass enough to make it seem to those who have to suffer him that he cannot be far removed from those pre-human creatures of the past whose inability to grow out of their stupidity is supposed to have caused their extinction, but whether the numerical proportion of such down-right stupid people, as distinguished from those classed as mentally deficient, is greater in Africa than in Europe is a question to which it is not yet possible to give an answer. The depth of human imbecility has been deplored by

the clever ones in all countries since man learned to read and write, but we are still without means of telling whether actual stupidity, as apart from mere illiteracy, is more widespread in one country than in another. Some day in the future it may, perhaps, become possible for the students of genetics to devise methods for detecting and measuring racial differences of intelligence. Just as it may now be shown that certain diseases are more prevalent in some races than in others so it may, perhaps, one day be proved that a diathesis of dull-mindedness, as it were, is more prevalent in the African race than in the European, and if this were to happen we should at last have come to know something to help us to account for the fact that the Natives of Africa have never as a race attained to that stage of cultural development which marks the beginnings of the great ancient civilizations.

But before we proceed further with this discussion we ought, perhaps, to ask what exactly we mean by intelligence if, indeed, the name is capable of exact verbal definition.

According to high authority in the learned world intelligence has no definite meaning at all but is merely a hypostatized word applied indiscriminately to a number of more or less loosely associated abstractions. The philosopher who made this pronouncement was himself unable to find words that would say little enough for the desired definition. Eventually, by a refined statistical analysis based on the geometry of figures in space of sixteen or so dimensions, the famous general intelligence factor "g" was discovered but the true esoteric significance of this symbol is hardly to be comprehended by people commonly accepted as intelligent unless they are also possessed of trained mathematical ability.

It would seem, indeed, that it is not possible to find



existing words wherewith to provide a satisfactory definition of intelligence for the use of ordinarily intelligent people.

Another contemporary philosopher, one who is justly famous for his ability to make abstruse matters more or less comprehensible to ordinary intelligent laymen, has in discussing this subject admitted the impossibility of giving the desired verbal definition, and has had to fall back, as the rest of us must needs do, on description of the behaviour which is characteristic of intelligence as compared with behaviour which is not so regarded. This, of course, is the method used by all African Natives when they are requested by curious ethnographers to explain the meaning of words for which synonyms do not exist in the language spoken. The English housemaid who has difficulty in laying the fire in the fireplace because she has not perceived that the fuel will not burn without a suitable draught of air underneath it is cited as an example of an unintelligent person, whereas a famous politician is cited as an instance of a person of undoubted intelligence.

To the white man in South Africa who has observed the ways of Natives as well as those of his own politicians these examples will probably not seem very well chosen. For if there is one thing which the average raw Native youth can do better than the average white man it is the lighting of fire under difficult conditions, and as for the politicians, the ordinary person will feel that the qualities by means of which the successful ones succeed are not necessarily those that are called for in those fields of mental activity where what he likes to think of as high intelligence is demanded but that they are rather something like the qualities that are commonly recognized in the Natives as low cunning and craftiness,



qualities which the ordinary white man has come to regard as being not quite of the same order as that particular but undefinable sort of intelligence with which, as he has been taught to think, his own race has been more abundantly blessed than the rest.

But is there really a true distinction of kind to be drawn between intelligence and cunning? Can the degree of intelligence be determined by the object to which it is directed so that the intelligence of, say, the successful swindler is to be regarded as inferior in itself to the intelligence of the successful detective who tracks him down in the interests of law and order? The difference is, surely, not one of degree but of content or scope. Also, there is to be remembered the point of view, as for instance, where the successful litigant commends the intelligence of his lawyer while the unsuccessful opponent curses him for a cunning rogue.

Chibaza was a raw Native who got himself into prison for the crime of rape. Being a resourceful person he contrived to break out of gaol and, on his way to his home-district, where he hoped to find friends among whom to hide from his pursuers, he broke into a lonely police station and stole a magazine rifle together with a good supply of ammunition. Thus armed he roamed at large a long time playing many rôles to avoid capture. One of these rôles was that of an ordinary simple, law-abiding Native in which he pretended that he had found in the veld what he believed to be the rifle which, as everybody had heard, had been stolen by the notorious Chibaza. Carrying the rifle over his shoulder he would march boldly into a kraal and ask the people to tell him where the police who were looking for Chibaza had last been seen so that he might go and deliver to them the weapon he had found and by so doing perhaps receive

a reward from the Government. Then when he had ascertained the whereabouts of the nearest police patrol and had refreshed himself with the food given him by the good people whom he had impressed favourably with his air of propriety and his pretended good intentions he would stalk off in the direction of the indicated patrol, and, as soon as he was out of sight, turn round and travel rapidly in the opposite direction.

This trick is typical of the sort of stratagems which Natives think out for themselves when they wish to avoid discovery, and for this kind of thinking a fairly high order of intelligence, in the ordinary undefinable sense of that word, would seem to be required.

It is, of course, in the nature of things that in so-called primitive people the exercise of intelligence should be manifested chiefly, almost entirely, in efforts at escape or evasion by means of some sort of false pretences but, on the other hand, we can hardly deny that it is to the same ends and, largely, with the same means, that the intelligence of large numbers of highly civilized white people is still directed in the multifarious pursuits of modern business and finance.

Primarily, of course, to be intelligent is to be able to circumvent nature and to outwit our fellow-beings. In Africa mother nature has, perhaps, been a little too kind to her children in that she has provided them with an easy environment with little in it of that stimulus for the development of shelter and tools which in the sterner climate of Europe has served to create modern technology, the thing which more than any other factor has helped to establish white supremacy.

But although there has never been in Africa any great need for intelligence to circumvent hostile forces of nature in the way of long and cold winters there has



always been the need for good mother-wit to cope with human enemies, and thus it is that we find what we should expect to find, namely, a persistent tendency in the Natives to make use of their natural intelligence rather in the way of evasion and subterfuge than in efforts to get positive power and advantage over others. Yet, fraudulent and theftuous dealings, however reprehensible in the eyes of the good citizen, require for their successful issue good intelligence, and, in respect of intelligence applied to such ends it would seem that the Natives, when allowance is made for lack of education, are not inferior to the European rogues in Africa and elsewhere. This is not to suggest that the present attempts of the Native forgers and imposters, for whom as yet there has been comparatively little scope, can be compared with the large performances of Nordic master-swindlers in Europe and America but I, for one, knowing as I do the aptitude of the Natives for simulation and deceit, having seen so many of their frauds successfully perpetrated upon astute Europeans, cannot doubt that, given equality of opportunity, our Africans will very soon produce their quota of thieves and forgers as competent as the most accomplished rogues anywhere.

In business, it is generally understood, not only honesty but also intelligence is essential to success, though most of us have known of successful men of business who seemed to have been lacking in one or other of these attributes, but however that may be, it has to be admitted that the so-called business-brain, the most highly valued of all the alleged modern varieties of brain, has not yet been manifested by many Natives in Africa. This fact, however, would seem to be not necessarily due to inborn incapacity but rather to the African environment which is generally held accountable also for the equally



noticeable lack of enterprise and success in business among the Dutch-speaking Europeans in South Africa, the descendants of people who were renowned for their capacity for successful commerce. One thing is not disputed: in their traffic with white traders the Natives hold their own, a fact which most white people of to-day will agree to regard as a sure sign of good, general intelligence turned to good account.

Nevertheless, the argument that intelligence is intelligence, one and the same thing, whether it be applied to good or to bad purposes is not likely to avail much against the great majority of white people who will have it that the intelligence of the Native is not as good as that of the white man.

For the support of this almost universal persuasion the theory advanced some years ago in France in the name of anthropology that the mind of the savage, that is, of course, the black savage, is not a logical mind like the mind of the European but an illogical or, in the accepted jargon, a pre-logical, mind not suited for logical thinking, has been readily received, and by popular interpretation this theory has come to be taken also as scientific authority for the belief that the alleged deficiency of the Native mind is inborn and heritable and therefore not to be made good by education.

Among those who have first-hand knowledge of the so-called savages of Africa this theory has not found acceptance. Upon reflection it is seen that illogicality is always a matter of degree in the sense that few people, if any, are capable of applying logical reasoning throughout the whole range of their mental activities. The English commonly profess to believe that the French are more logical than themselves, but if indeed there is a difference in this respect between the two people it will

surely be found to lie not in any difference of their mental make-up but simply in the circumstance that, somehow, in England, rather more than in France, educated people have come to recognize the illogicality of importing logic into the domain of human nature where strict logic is not applicable; in other words, we may believe at most that in England, rather more than in France, thinking people have come to realize that when people become too logical they become illogical.

Although all good reasoning, whether it goes on in the untutored mind of the simple African or in the trained mind of the European intellectual, must proceed logically from certain premises, those premises themselves need not be logically derived, and although we may well believe that the European intellectual will, as a rule, be less ready than the simple African to accept premises for his thinking which depend only upon the authority of convention or religious belief we see that in this respect there is no difference between the superstitious European and the superstitious African, for, apart from their particular superstitions and religious beliefs they will both think as logically as can be desired upon all matters which fall within the ambit of their separate daily existence. It is when men, white or black, come up against the mysteries of life and death, such as the unknown cause of unusual sickness in a primitive community or the fact of death itself in a civilized family, that they allow their imagination, unhindered by their critical faculties, to provide them with unquestioned premises whereon to build, with regional variations, their little logical superstructures in accordance with the promptings of elemental human hopes and fears.

For instance: The head of a Native kraal in Africa has been advised by the local diviner to make a sacrifice to



the ancestral spirits in order that the sickness from which his people have been suffering may be removed. Accordingly, on the day appointed, when the beer is ready to be drunk, he addresses the departed spirits while the members of his family attend in silence, and, as he throws a handful of grain at the ox that has been set aside for sacrifice he intones: "Father! This is your meat. We beseech you to speak to your father that he may speak to his father, and he again to his father right away to the old, old fathers whose names we do not now know. We pray to be saved from all the sicknesses that are abroad to-day." If the ox shakes itself and seems to tremble, as cattle sometimes do when their skins are tickled, it is seen that the spirits have been pleased to hearken, whereupon the animal is killed, the meat cooked and eaten and the beer is drunk so that the spirits who themselves have no bellies and cannot therefore partake of the meat and the beer may be pleased at seeing their children eat and drink in remembrance of their fathers who begat them.

Then, when the feast is over, the kraal-head goes to the doctor of medicines to whom he has been referred by the diviner and gets the needed medicine which, as understood, might not have been of any use without the sacrificial remembrance, and in the usual course of events the sick ones recover despite the medicine they have swallowed.

This is a typical example of the practice of ancestor worship common among most Bantu. There are, of course, many variations not so innocuous as this, but the idea underlying them all is the appeal to the last departed father's spirits for intercession with those who went before him in sequence up to the oldest and most venerable of them all for succour in time of sickness.



Let us now compare this simple ceremony with one gone through for a similar purpose in a highly civilized, modern community of Europeans, as narrated in an English weekly paper a few years ago.

“ On Monday morning it happened that I attended the beautiful church of St. Ethelreda—the only pre-reformation building in London, I believe, that has now returned to the Roman Catholic worship—while an extraordinary ceremony was in progress. The church was crowded with people who were obviously business people from the offices round about. At the altar-steps the believers knelt and rested the throat in the crutch between two lighted tapers, fastened in the form of a cross; while they did so a priest prayed for the intercession of St. Blaise to cure their colds and preserve them from throat troubles. I looked up St. Blaise or St. Blaize afterwards and could not find that this ceremony of the blessing of the throat is mediaeval: it seems to be quite a modern piece of pious magic. Apparently, however, it was once a custom to charm a bone out of a throat in the name of the saint who, when on his way to martyrdom in the fourth century, is recorded to have removed by a touch a fish-bone out of a boy’s throat. It was certainly interesting to find a church full of business men and women devoutly absorbed in this strange example of faith-healing. If by the age of faith we mean the age of superstition, we are living in it now. After all, it is no more foolish to pray to St. Blaize to cure a bad throat than it is to pay a quack, or to worship at the shrine of some fancy psychological cult.”

Now, these instances, which may be taken as typical alike of the heathen Africans and of very large numbers of Christian Europeans, seem to show that there is no difference in the mental attitude of the bulk of the people

of the two races towards the various superstitions and religious beliefs with which they happen to be severally provided; the nature, if not the incidence, of irrational or non-logical belief is the same among them all. The Natives, moreover, as I have often observed, appear to be no less able than Europeans to keep superstition or religion separate from the ordinary logical or rational thinking that is required for the ordinary business and conduct of daily life. When our African ancestor-worshippers have made an end of offering meat to spirits which, being spirits, cannot eat it, they revert to their ordinary manner of logical or rational thinking as easily as do the English worshippers of canonized saints when they leave their church and go back to their ordinary matter-of-fact existence.

It was always so and it is still so wherever superstition and religion still persist. Roman soldiers in the past consulted the entrails of fowls for guidance in their military expeditions, and modern statesmen resort to random Bible-reading for similar purposes. Thousands of more or less educated people go nowadays openly to listen to the mouthings of so-called mediums purporting to convey messages from the dead as did the ancient Jews despite the prophet's warning against seeking unto them that have familiar spirits and the wizards that peep and that mutter. Others, in even greater numbers, congregate regularly in the newest of churches to receive solemn assurance from readers of the newest of sacred books that mortal sickness is the result of error preventable by the right kind of belief.

Logicity is clearly not a particular endowment confined to the people of one race nor is it anywhere necessarily concerned with the truth or falsehood of first premises. From the preposterous premises of the dogma



of predestination, as they now seem to most of us, was drawn most logically the conclusion that eternal damnation in a hell of fearful suffering awaits the overwhelming mass of men in every generation, and the doctrine of the atonement was derived with equally good logic from premises which now seem utterly irrational to most thinking people. Newton, whose capacity for logical reasoning must be reckoned one of the greatest the world has ever known, was nevertheless capable of writing dismal drivel about the prophecies contained in the Book of Revelation. Despite his supreme capacity for logical thinking he was yet able to accept without logical enquiry, as many of his scientific successors of to-day are also able to do, those unquestioned premises upon which dogmatic or formulated religions are erected. Similarly, the good Roman Catholic believer is able to think as logically as anybody else up to the point where the Church pronounces its indisputable judgment, and, similarly, again, the raw Native ancestor-worshipper is able to think as logically as anybody else up to the point where the social tradition of his tribe makes the very idea of questioning unthinkable. Grant one absurdity, said Aristotle, and the rest follow. Eliminate the impossible by denying it, and what remains, however improbable, must be the truth. Assume that to be true which cannot be proved untrue and boundless faith results; and thus is created in human beings of all kinds the thing which made Darwin exclaim when he pondered over it, "What an inexplicable frame of mind is belief?"

All religious beliefs, as we know, are superstitions to their opponents, and for the complete unbeliever there is no exception; for him all so-called magic, however hallowed, whether black or white, ancient or modern, is merely make-believe and mumbo-jumbo, all of it illogical



and irrational. To him, therefore, it seems no more rational to believe that we may wish a friend into a state of good health by means of prayer than to believe that we may wish an enemy into his grave by means of curses and witchcraft, but this his unbelief will not, of course, prevent the sophisticated sceptic of to-day from recognizing that both religion and magic, however these may be distinguished by our learned anthropologists, have always been, and will almost certainly continue to be, of practical necessity for the mass of mankind of all races at all stages.

In primitive communities such thorough-going sceptics can, in the nature of things, hardly ever survive long enough to make themselves felt. The Mephistophelian *Geist der stets verneint* that alone can drive men through honest questioning to rational conclusions is soon stifled in an atmosphere wherein the slightest questioning of the authority of irrational tradition is itself regarded as a form of witchcraft to be punished with death.

Nevertheless, I have from time to time heard murmurings of doubt and scoffing from untutored Natives when they have been caught in the toils of their traditional superstitions and beliefs. I remember an errant young woman brought before me by her husband who demanded compensation from her paramour. The woman admitted her guilt but pleaded that she had been made silly by something that "had come over her," and that in her dalliance with the young man she had allowed him to cut off her pubic hairs which he had made into a medicine whereby to "hold" her and whereby also, as he had said, her husband would be entirely blinded if he were made to look at it. When questioned by me this woman confessed that she had not really believed that

the concoction, which the young man was made to produce in court, had the power he had claimed for it; she told how he had lured her away by promises of easy living and how, when these promises remained unfulfilled, she had tired of him and had decided to go back to her husband. When I compelled the husband to look closely at the medicine and nothing happened to the good man's eyes the woman forgot for the moment the solemnity of the surroundings and jeered loudly at the discomfited pretender to magical power.

I have often asked intelligent Natives if they really believed that so-called witchcraft-medicine could act upon a person to his hurt from a distance without his being aware of its existence, and the answers I have received have always been much the same as those one still gets from orthodox European Christians to the question whether they really believe in miracles, namely that the faith of our fathers requires us to believe in such things, and that we should not ask questions about them.

It would be easy to continue the recital of instances from within my own observation to demonstrate the ability in Natives to keep more or less apart in separate compartments, as it were, their rational from their non-rational thinking. Such instances crowd in upon me as I write and press for admission. I shall admit only one or two more.

A Native woman was charged with having made a false accusation of rape against a youth who appeared to be hardly old enough to be able to commit that crime, and when cross-examined she admitted that she had lied against the boy because her husband had forced her to do so. "My husband," she said, "cannot give me a child, and I cannot live always as a barren woman. So I said to myself 'I shall get a child for myself by another

man.' I got my sister to speak for me to certain men we knew but they would not help me. Then I told her to speak to the boy. He came to see me in the evening and we arranged that we should meet on the following day at a certain spot some distance from our huts where we should not be seen. Before I went to meet the boy I carried my husband's box, the one in which he keeps his clothes, out of the hut and put it under a bush near by. I did this because I have been told by the old women that if a married woman does not remove her husband's belongings from his hut before she goes to meet her lover death from coughing will overtake her husband. I did not want my husband to die, I only wanted a child. When I came back to the hut after I had had intercourse with the boy I found that my husband had discovered his box outside; he was very angry and he made me tell him what I had done. Then he beat me with a stick till I fell on the ground, and the next day he went to the boy and demanded money from him for what he had done to me, but the boy had no money. Then my husband came back and said to me that he would beat me again if I did not go at once and tell the police that I had been raped by the boy. He told me to show the police the stripes he himself had caused on my back and to say that they had been made by the boy to make me submit to him. I did as I was bidden because I was afraid of being beaten again."

When I asked this woman if she had achieved her purpose she said she could not be sure about that till a couple of months had passed. Like all Native women she knew all that the ordinary European woman knows about the process of human fecundation; she had made up her mind to end her time of barrenness, the condition hardly to be tolerated by an untutored African



woman, and she knew what to do, for, whatever may be said in this respect about other so-called savages, such as the now famous Trobrianders, it cannot be said that the raw African does not know all there is to be known by the ordinary intelligent layman about the facts of physical fatherhood. In all such matters this woman was able to reason out her case as logically as any civilized white person, and when she came to the point where the superstitious lore of her tribe had to be followed she switched over, so to speak, to the non-rational compartment of her mind and acted "pre-logically" in exactly the same way as do European believers when they perform the rites prescribed for them for warding off evil.

Again, there is a Bantu custom which ordains that if a pregnant woman dies her husband must remove the foetus surgically and bury the two bodies apart. When asked for the reason for this custom the Natives will say that if it is not followed the spirit of the mother will come and plague the man and make him sexually impotent—the direst fate that can be imagined for a Native man—and if it is further asked why this should be so the question is begged *circulus in probando* by saying that it is because the two bodies must not be buried in the same grave. All this is illogical and irrational enough, but the people who think and talk in this way about this particular custom are nevertheless quite able to introduce distinctions in their considerations of matters relevant to it which would seem logically warranted by most Europeans.

Of this I had an example one day when I happened to come upon a party of Natives who were about to bury the body of a woman who had died in childbirth. When I learned that the operation of removing the dead child

was to be done by an old woman and not by the dead woman's husband I enquired from him as to whether, in delegating this duty to another, he was not transgressing the law of his fathers, seeing that, as I had heard, it had been made the particular duty of the husband himself because, as it was said, it was he who had placed the child where it had died. To this the man replied, with every sign of sorrow, that he could not do the deed; his heart, as he put it, would not consent, and he had therefore asked the old woman to do for him what had to be done. To my further question whether by this evasion he would not incur the wrath of the spirits he answered that, no doubt, they would be angry but that he thought they would not be very angry because they knew that he had not the heart to use a knife upon the body of his beloved wife.

Muddled and silly as all this undoubtedly is, it seems to me not much more so than the answers one gets from European believers when they are asked to give reasons for, say, the prohibition against the reading of the burial service at the grave of a suicide.

It is in the rites and customs attending the disposal of dead bodies that the illogicality which is common to all mankind is particularly evident. I recollect how I once caused consternation in a European community by allowing the dead body of a little child, whose parents were regarded as being not quite white, to be buried in a European cemetery. The dismay of some of the pure white Christians in the place seemed quite genuine; they pointed out to me that the cemetery had been consecrated by a real clergyman and set aside for Europeans only. Since then I have been told by a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church that, according to the scriptures, the separation of the white and the black races will be con-



tinued in heaven as it is upon earth—he said nothing about hell—and that those Natives who are permitted to enter the heavenly abodes will be separately accommodated in some of the many mansions of which mention is made in the New Testament. This belief may not, indeed, be officially sanctioned, but there is no doubt that it is held by many fundamentalists in South Africa. Thus there is the story, which, if not to be proved literally true is certainly *ben trovato*, of the good farmer who regaled his family at the breakfast table with a minute account of a dream he had dreamed in which he had found himself in heaven, where he had met many of his deceased relatives and acquaintances. Then, when he had come to the end of his recital of the names of all those he had seen in heaven, his old Hottentot servant, listening at the open door, and forgetting for a moment the respect he owed to his master, cried: “And did Baas not catch sight also of my old wife who has been dead two years now?” “What do you ask?” replied the farmer sternly. “I did not go into the kitchen.”

There is to be remembered, also, in making these comparisons that, like our good selves, the Natives, when they feel that doubt is being cast by importunate questioners on the profession they have made of a certain belief, are prone to avow a much stronger belief than what they really have, just as among ourselves we often find a blazing and uncomfortable conviction being produced by doubt and contradiction from outside rather than by dispassionate inner searchings. However well trained, therefore, the modern field-anthropologist may believe himself to be for the elicitation of the thoughts and beliefs of an African tribe, he must, unless he has come in his early years to know the language of the Natives as well as they know it themselves, always labour



under the disadvantage of not being able to feel whether his informant really believes that to be true which he has professed to believe, or whether he is merely giving expression to outward and proper conformity with the general lore of his people. It is only when the student has become one with the Natives in his mastery of their idiomatic and elliptical speech that he will be able to tell with reasonable certainty whether the professed belief is held positively and individually or simply as something which convention ordains must be professed by all good people in a community wherein open non-conformity is not socially safe.

Among some Bantu tribes there is a custom that when a man has cut down a large, growing tree to make a corn-mortar of its trunk, he must ask forgiveness of it and say certain words to show that his act was not of wanton destructiveness but of necessity. One day, many years ago, I came upon one of my Native servants as he was intoning the traditional words over the stump of a big tree he had just felled on which he had placed a small plaited ring of grass with a stone on top of it to keep it from being blown away. When I asked him why he did this, seeing that he had cut the tree down for my purpose and not for his own, he said, with a smile that was almost a wink, that the axe had been seen in his hand, meaning, of course, that as he was the man who had done the actual deed he was also the proper person to ask forgiveness, whereupon I asked him if he believed that trees had spirits as human beings have. To this he replied that he knew nothing about such things; that all he knew was that it was the custom to do as he had done when he had killed a big, living tree.

Now, I suppose it is possible to see in this custom vestiges of that assumed pre-logical child-mind of the

primeval savage which so easily furnished trees and stones with spirits or souls to be feared and worshipped, but at the time I observed the incident I have described it seemed to me that the man did not really believe that a spirit of the tree he had cut down had watched him do so or that it was able to hear what he was saying. If, however, I had allowed myself to ridicule his childishness in believing such fairy-tales, I might, quite likely, have roused the spirit of assertiveness that is often strongly present in many apparently mild and docile people, and thereby have made him appear to myself as a strong believer after the most straitest sect of African animism. What I had witnessed seemed to me no more than a pretty little piece of pretence, after the manner of early Greek mythology, by way of expressing regret such as might well suggest itself to a person of sensibility and imagination at seeing a great, noble tree being sent crashing to the ground. Since then I have read of Buddhist priests in Japan performing similar, if more ornate, rites at the cutting down of large camphor trees. Whether all such gestures must be taken to derive always from a belief in the actual thing symbolised or presented I leave to others to settle, if they can; to me it seems obvious that not only Europeans and Asiatics but Africans as well are generally capable of observing symbolic rites and customs without necessarily "believing" in the actuality of the thing symbolised or imagined.

One of the most plausible allegations of mental inferiority in the African Native to come from an apparently authoritative source has recently been made by an American professor in a large book written to demonstrate the stupidity of mankind in general. In this book it is argued that the greatest differences between white and black people reside in the degree and quality of the



integrative action of the mind, and that these differences are in the main hereditary. To illustrate this disparity instances showing that part of the Bantu pattern of speech which is built on a system of alliterative pronominal prefixes are given which, it is claimed, prove that that pattern is the product of a mind that integrates poorly, one that cannot carry a moderately complex proposition in thought from moment to moment. It is to this difference in the integrative action of the nervous system, as manifested most conspicuously in grammar, that the stupidities peculiar to the black man can all be traced, says the professor; and he sees therein a reason for his further allegation that the African has an unbelievably wretched practical memory while at the same time he is the greatest linguist on earth, which puzzling anomaly is explained by saying that when we inspect minutely the mental behaviour of the black people, we find that there is high momentary integration, but virtually none from moment to moment.

That the structure of a language is an index of the inherent mental capacity of the people who speak it is not an implausible assumption. The difference between the capacity of the language used by a Whitehead or a Hoeffding from that of the language of any African Native is indeed so vast as to lend plausibility to the notion that the development of the modern European languages, which constitutes, perhaps, the highest of all collective human achievements, could have been possible only for the European brain and tongue. Compared with the wealth of words for the expression of time and space-relations and abstract conceptions generally that has accumulated in the languages of Europe, the extreme poverty in those respects of the languages of Africa is certainly very striking. But we must not forget that it



was by the magic of comparatively simple words that mankind first discovered God and raised themselves above the beasts. Was it, then, the thought that formed the language or the language the thought?

The desire to see superiority in everything of their own is strongly present in large sections of the white race. Thus we have the claim seriously stated in a recently published German book that the Nordic race alone can emit sounds of untroubled clearness because the shape of the Nordic gum allows a superior movement of the tongue not possible in the non-Nordic mouth.

Knowing, as I do, more than one African language as well as my own mother-tongue I am able to see that it is not the grammatical construction of the Bantu speech that causes it to be the comparatively ineffective vehicle for abstract thought which it admittedly is, but that the cause of that deficiency is simply the lack of those specialised words which have been evolved elsewhere in communities where literacy having once been started has been continued during very long periods. This lack is, however, to some extent made good by the ability of the Natives to make one word express several different concepts or situations through the context in which it is used where the educated European requires several words each carrying its own special meaning, and it would seem hardly safe to say that this ability in the uneducated Native denotes a mental capacity inferior to that of the European who makes use of a very much larger vocabulary of specialised words. Indeed, it almost seems as if the contrary might be deduced, seeing that for the sophisticated mind intellectual satisfaction is attained by elimination of the superfluous.

Not that I would make light of the grievous want in the African languages of verbal equivalents for those

thousands of words which for the European make possible the expression of advanced thought. I know only too well the feelings of frustration and annoyance that are suffered by all would-be teachers of Native adolescents when they are foiled in their attempts to convey elevated thoughts by words that cannot be made to get off the ground; such continuous vexation of the irritable nervous system with which so many of us nowadays are afflicted leads to high blood-pressure. Yet, when all is said, languages in which, if you know them sufficiently well, you can express, within the limits set by lack of advanced education, very fine shades of meaning and indulge in speculations in the pluperfect subjunctive can hardly be regarded as denoting inferior powers of mental integration in their inventors.

Although, therefore, a small vocabulary of specialised words, in the individual or in the race, may well be taken as an indication of mental poverty, it by no means follows that it may be taken as an indication of inherent mental incapacity in either. In some directions the vocabulary of the uneducated white peasants in South Africa is much smaller than that of the uneducated Natives, but that deficiency can, as we know, be made up in the course of a few years. The number of Natives who have passed the examination that gives entrance to the universities is as yet small, but those who have passed it seem able to express themselves fairly well in English, the richest of all languages, despite the fact that they have not been in the way of learning it through daily use in early years.

As to the questioned faculty of integration, so called, I think that all those who as judicial officers or administrators of Natives in Africa have had long experience of Native argumentation will agree that the Native litigant is generally able to size up and to keep clear in his mind

the facts and probabilities of even very complicated situations of the kind with which, as a Native, he is concerned. It was Schopenhauer who said that the understanding of the stupidest man becomes keen when objects are in question that closely concern his wishes. Like all primitive people, black or white, the Natives are not naturally interested in things beyond their immediate concern. The interest that is nowadays being displayed by newspaper-reading white people everywhere in everything that can be reported or discussed in the press is clearly not an inborn characteristic peculiar to Europeans. The European peasant, wherever he may still be found in his illiterate state, is naturally incurious about things that do not come within his own immediate sphere of interests, but he is not therefore to be regarded as a stupid person.

I think also that those Europeans who know the African Native will say that his powers of memory compare as a rule very well with their own. The Native's memory is in fact neither worse nor better than that of the ordinary European, although it may often seem to be better by reason, no doubt, of the tendency of the educated European to rely rather too much on his note-book. That many Natives learn more easily than Europeans to speak Bantu languages cognate to their own is only natural, yet I have met many Natives who in the matter of learning foreign languages have shown powers of resistance almost as great as those of the typical English public school-boy.

The most comprehensive and the most generally believed allegation against the Native is that he is at best only a grown-up child, and as such incapable of attaining to equal status with the white man. No one ever thinks of questioning this universal appraisal which so con-



veniently concludes all polite discussions of the Native Question. Somehow it is not realized that the most pronounced characteristic of the Native in his natural and undisturbed state is his intense conservatism, the very quality that differentiates most clearly the mentality of the old from that of the young. It is because of this essential conservatism that the Native, unlike the child, is not interested in all manner of indifferent things, but is, on the contrary, very much like the educated European of mature years who is largely unconscious of all that does not interest him, and is therefore able to ignore easily what is irrelevant to his main pursuits.

Thus, whatever may be said against the normal, untutored Native's outlook upon life, it cannot be truly said that it is in any way childish. I have often listened to the arguments of the men of the kraals against those who would turn the young people from the old ways. Those arguments run to show that by going over to the ways of the white people the black man will lose all that is good for him and gain nothing. It is shown how he will lose greatly by not being allowed to have more than one wife, seeing that if he marries by Christian rites he will not be permitted to take a new wife, even when the one he has begins to grow old, so that he will then be like the white man in such case who can only find a man's rightful pleasure by stealing it at night away from his own home.

The universal Native custom of payment of bride-price by the husband is shown to make the begetting of girl-children the most suitable way of gathering wealth for black men, and, in similar strain, the women also will enjoin the young marriageable girls to hold fast to the old traditions. They will point out that it is not good for a woman to be always alone with her husband; that

every woman needs another woman to keep her company and to help her with her work when in the course of nature she is not feeling strong, and they will bid the girls remember that when a man has two or three wives there is pleasant noise and the laughter of children, but when he has only one wife there is loneliness and silence.

In these values, which are typical of all primitive African society, there is surely nothing childish; rather do we see in them the sort of common sense and wordly wisdom that we associate with mental maturity, and, indeed, it is this ancient wisdom that has helped to preserve the simple state of earth-bound sufficiency by which Africa has been saved from the twin evils of involuntary spinsterhood and prostitution that prevail in all over-civilized communities.

Childish and clownish behaviour we do, of course, see often enough in the young Natives who come to work in the towns where they have to live cut off from the supports and restraints of their home-existence, but such behaviour is clearly not the consequence of a racial disposition different from that of the whites. In the new and, for him, artificial surroundings the young Native can hardly avoid the loss of balance that makes him so often silly and grotesque, but in such reaction to a new environment for which he has had no preparation he behaves as I think we should expect young people of all races to behave when placed in similar circumstances.

That the behaviour of the bulk of the raw Natives is in many ways inconsequent like that of overgrown children lacking in sense of responsibility is true enough, but in contradistinction to the careless and carefree people of the kraals, we see the steadily growing numbers of those who are being drawn into the white man's economic system wherein they tend already to become

like the care-ridden toilers of the white race who march daily in other lands to the music of stern necessity.

The depreciation of the Natives' intelligence that has been made on the strength of certain tests carried out in the Union of South Africa not long ago has been widely accepted in the belief that the results of those tests furnish conclusive evidence of inborn mental inferiority in the African race, but that belief is not shared by those whose experience as teachers of both African and European adolescents enable them to make legitimate comparisons. Despite the apparent consonance between the results of the African tests and those of the American army tests made during the time of the Great War, which latter showed the average intelligence quotient of the Negroes and the Italians to be about 90 as compared with the general white 100, it is now generally held by competent students of these matters that it is not possible to compare groups of widely different culture on the basis of any such common tests, because the factor of environment, with the consequent difference of emotional reaction to the application of the tests, is not amenable to anything like exact statement.

To me it has long been obvious that valid comparisons can only be made between grown-up members of both races, and then only through easy enquiry in the course of conversation directed to the desired ends when the required confidence has been established by complete understanding of the Native's own idiomatic speech. I have often during such conversation with Natives of little or no school-education discussed the question of free-will as presented in the schoolmen's problem of Buridan's Ass. Will the hungry ass placed between two equidistant bundles of hay of equal attraction be able to make a choice, or will he die of starvation? Like most Euro-



peans to whom I have put this question, the Natives have questioned the possibility of the premised balance, but when it has been explained to them that this must be completely accepted, they have answered, as have most of the Europeans, either, that to save himself from starvation the poor donkey would sooner or later make a choice, or they have said that the problem has no answer.

I would not be misunderstood. I do not say that the average Native is able to discuss philosophical problems as stated in the abstract terms that have become intelligible through long use to Europeans of liberal education, but I do say that if such problems can be presented actually in words that call up situations within the sphere of their African experience, the Natives will show no less intelligence in their attempts at solution than will ordinary European laymen when the questions are put to them through posited situations within their European experience.

Having had occasion to enquire some time ago as to the motive for a serious assault committed by a Native woman upon her lover with whom she had been living and of whom, according to the evidence, she had been exceedingly fond, I was told by a Native neighbour of the pair that he had observed that her love for the man had turned suddenly to hate. "These things happen," he said, "hate comes from love, it is because hate and love are together in the heart." Can we say that discernment of this kind is compatible with an inferior order of intelligence? Turgenev discovered this antinomy in the nature of love itself in his plays wherein he portrayed men and women as capable of loving and hating the same object at the same time, but Turgenev was a genius. As far as I know, I have never met a genius, black or white, in the flesh, though I have known a few very able men

and women of my own colour, but whether the proportion of high mental ability is the same in the population of Africa as in that of Europe no one can tell at present, because the number of those Africans who have received education adequate for the manifestation of such ability is as yet exceedingly small.

Comparisons, it is said, are odious, perhaps because in making them we are apt to esteem our own kind too highly. In contrast to the intellectual achievements of the whites, the lack of anything approaching such achievement in the blacks is so striking as to make it seem almost certain that the mental capacity of the African can never have been equal to that of the European. Nevertheless, our anthropologists have come to the conclusion that man's intrinsic capacity for the exercise of human intelligence has not increased since his first emergence in the remote past when his cultural achievements were no greater than those of the untutored African Natives of to-day, so that the present enormous difference between European and African attainment is seen to be not necessarily the result of inherently superior intelligence in the European race. Thinkers of to-day are not so given to extolling human intelligence as were their precursors in past generations; the present estimate is not nearly so flattering to our vanity as it was. Our psychologists do not talk about man's god-like reason, rather do they seek to expiscate the peculiarities of his cerebrations from the observed behaviour of his nearest relatives among the animals. What we call our intelligences are being seen as mental instruments which are still so inefficient that they cannot hold more than three points together in thought, cannot think of B without forgetting A, and as unable to apprehend the most obvious implications of a view unless made to do so by the grossest of absurdities.



And even thus depreciated, this intelligence of ours, we are told, is only fully possessed by a very small proportion of the world's population. The number, it is said, of those human beings who are prone to abstract thought and abstract speculation has always formed, and still forms, an exceedingly small minority, so much so, that for ninety-nine per cent. of all living men and women abstract thought is near enough to impossibility.

Now, however we may regard these modern estimates of human intelligence, its capacity and its extent, we cannot but recognize that, apart from strictly mathematical thinking by those, comparatively few, who are capable of it, the rest of our thinking about ourselves and about the things that most closely concern us remains, despite our modern education, muddled and illogical. Notwithstanding all our vaunted progress we all remain more or less illogical and childish; however we may profess to respect the time-honoured syllogism, when we come to think of the things of first importance to ourselves, we proceed not by way of sorites but rather along the plane of wishful thinking.

I remember how, in answer to certain questions, I was told by my "car-boy" one night as we drove home from a Native spirit-dance that the different kinds of spirits were to be recognized by the different songs to which we had been listening, and how, some days afterwards, I happened to read a book in which the learned author, using affectively toned words, deduced the existence of God—the capital G is in point—from the assumed existence of continuous "upward" progress in nature, through which reading I was reminded of the similar mode of reasoning that had enabled my Native mechanic to establish the existence of different kinds of spirits by means of the different songs that are used by the Natives



to make them come forth. It was Bentham, the master-thinker, who pointed out that we all continually beg the question by our persistent use of "weighted" words, that is to say, words that are associated with things which we have already come to like or dislike through habit or tuition, so that they covertly import significance not actually to be seen in the subject that is to be considered. By recognizing this fact we see that impeccably rational thinking is hardly possible for any one of us so long as we have to make use of our ordinary vocabularies, made up, as they are, largely of words that are also metaphors. All this talk about a pre-logical as distinct from a logical mind is to me, at least, clearly occasioned by linguistic misunderstandings. The very word logic is the most protean of terms which, however, for the purpose of this discussion, I have taken as signifying the nexus that may be observed between the uniformities of existence and the future probabilities to which they are seen to give rise. Thus defined, we shall see that logicity prevails throughout the ordinary thinking of ordinary Natives as it does in ordinary European thinking, just as the everyday proverbs of the Natives resemble our own in demonstrating its universal presence. Take one, here in point, "The old woman disappeared: the leopard's dung showed grey hairs," said when some mysterious happening has been satisfactorily explained by subsequent events. Consecutive reasoning from cause to effect is no more difficult for the ordinary Native within the scope of his Native experience than it is for the ordinary European within the, in some respects, larger limits of his European experience. We can only think about what we already know, and we know things only because we are interested in them. Ordinary thinking has been described as a process of introducing distinctions. Milton, in his day,

defined reason in four words. "Reason is but choosing," he said, thereby anticipating our modern behaviourists. Can we say that the Natives who deliberately choose to remain as far as they possibly can free from the burdens of white civilization are less able to discern between their right hand and their left hand than we, their masters, who are beginning to see ourselves as the helpless slaves of our own inventions?

The foregoing statement, then, will show how I, for one, have come to believe, contrary to the belief of most of my own race, that the inherent intelligence of the Natives of Africa cannot be other than that of the Natives of Europe, from which conclusion, if accepted, it follows that the reason for the almost complete lack of intellectual achievement in Africa throughout recorded time must be sought outside the region of the Natives' intelligence. We shall, therefore, now turn to consider the allegations, more or less commonly made, of emotional and temperamental characteristics peculiar to the Native which if found to exist might, perhaps, be held to account for the cultural lag that has remained constant in Africa since the beginning of human history.

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## IV

### ALLEGED EMOTIONAL DIFFERENCES

"THE nigger hasn't got the feelings we have; if he had he would be ashamed of being a nigger, and that would make him unhappy, which he isn't; he doesn't worry about things like we do; a donkey can't run with a horse because he doesn't feel that way and because he isn't made that way." This opinion was given to me by an old prospector who professed to know all about the African Native. It is, I know, the opinion of most white people in Africa, including many of the intellectual class; indeed, something very like the version I have quoted was expressed by the doyen of that class some years ago when he told a meeting of educated negroes that, next to the ass, the Negroes were the most patient of all animals. In America, also, the same opinion has been stated by a well-invented spokesman for public opinion in that country thus: "Negroes are a docile people and easily lynched."

And this donkey-like docility so generally recognized has now come to be regarded by the whites generally as an inborn character denoting a nature essentially different from their own, a nature materially less sensitive than their own, which as such will make it impossible for the African Natives to react effectively to



the new environment of European civilization, so that they must of necessity remain unfit to share equally with the whites the privileges and responsibilities of white civilization.

The language I have used here to express this current belief is not, of course, the language of the average white man in Africa who, like the average man everywhere else, is not studious to find precise words for the expression of the beliefs he shares with his fellows, but however clearly this belief is expressed, it will be seen that it rests on the unquestioned assumption that the commonly observed appearance of asinine insensibility in the Native is the outward sign of an inherent and therefore unchangeable character. It is not recognized that collective demeanour may, no less than individual demeanour, be induced by outside circumstances, and that it is not therefore always safe to assume that it is the result of inner disposition. The whites as a whole do not consider this possibility; they feel simply that the Natives cannot feel as well or as finely as they can. And here I would mention, in passing, that the differentiation I am now making between intelligence and feeling is not made on the assumption that these things are actually separable, but merely for convenience of discussion in separate chapters. To me it seems that where there is no intelligence, and therefore no reflection, there can be little or no emotion, a consideration that will not, of course, affect those who anyhow refuse to credit the Natives with a full measure of human intelligence. But whatever the psychologists may have to say as to the possibility of a real dichotomy in this matter, it is certain that the great majority of white people in Africa are persuaded that whatever degree of intelligence the Natives may be proved to possess, they have not that natural capacity for

intense feeling with which the whites have been provided, and for this persuasion support has of recent years been drawn from certain scientific deliverances on the subject of endocrine secretion in the human body.

For instance, in a newspaper report of a lecture delivered at a South African university some time ago it was stated that the lecturer had said that it was now known that a man's personality was the result of secretions of certain glands in the body which pour their secretion directly into the blood and regulate appearance and mental characters; that normality, excess or deficiency of these internal secretions could be inherited not only by individuals but by races; that the adrenal gland was necessary for continued effort, among other things, and that the Negro races were deficient in respect of the functioning of this gland. From this and similar dissertations the conclusion has been drawn that the capacity of the Natives for feeling the feelings that are required for sustained effort in the way of high civilization is physiologically deficient, and that they are therefore doomed to a racial status unalterably below that of the whites.

The ordinary layman is naturally prone to accept whatever is said by those who are by virtue of their special learning supposed to know what they are talking about. He does not, therefore, stop to think that even if it were accepted by the several schools of psychology that every man's personality is the result of the secretions of his particular ductless glands and of nothing else it would still be necessary to prove by the testing, if that were practically possible, of many thousands of both black and white people that the adrenal glands in the Natives as a whole do not function as effectively for the purposes of high civilization as they do in the whites as a whole.

But such questioning of the evidence which the whites think they have for believing as they do is seldom heard. That the nervous or temperamental make-up of the Native is inherently deficient in comparison with that of the European seems to the Europeans too obvious to be worth questioning. As the Natives have never done anything by themselves in the way of advanced civilization it seems only natural to assume that they cannot have it in them to do anything great that way; that they simply cannot "feel like" doing the things the whites have never ceased to do.

History, it must be admitted, has no record of any collective performance by black people comparable with the achievements of the whites, past or present. Nevertheless, the argument that the absence of ability is proved by the absence of performance seems hardly conclusive for those who have lived, as I have, among the Natives in all stages of civilization and have observed in them the daily manifestations, in varying degrees of intensity, of all the different emotions that make up the different temperaments met with in the whitest aggregations of human kind.

The instances I shall give here from these observations of my own are not intended to prove that the temperaments or dispositions which they illustrate are common to the Natives as a whole, or even to the majority of them; they are cited simply to show that many Natives seem, when you come to know them, very much like the generality of white folk "under the skin," but what proportion their kind form of the whole population it is, of course, impossible for anyone to say. If it could be shown by comparative tests carried out on a sufficiently large scale that the number of individuals who are capable of reaching a particular standard of emotional



intensity and conative endurance is much smaller in African communities than in European we should be able to account for the unvaried lack of African endeavour in the past and to justify the racial discrimination that would then be proved necessary for the future, but few, I think, of those educated Europeans who have studied the Natives closely at first hand will regard such a result as probable.

That the Africans cannot feel the shame of nakedness as it is felt by Europeans is generally regarded as proved by the fact that they never thought of clothing themselves before the whites came, and by the same token it is argued that they must also be unable to feel the shame or humiliation of their inferior racial position seeing that they have never of their own accord sought to improve it. From these premises the conclusion is then conveniently drawn in support of the general belief that the Native's natural capacity for experiencing the finer emotions generally cannot be as great or as good as that of the European. Let us examine these premises briefly.

I have seen African men and women go about in their own habitat utterly naked and unashamed, but I have never seen or heard of any Natives, men or women, who in their normal or sober state did not show marked signs of shame at being observed in the act of defecation or in the act of sexual congress, and I have been given to understand that our own most thoroughgoing nudists in Europe and America also retain this sense of shame. This seems to me good evidence for believing that the sense of sexual shame is equally present in black and white people.

How mankind came to acquire this sense, of which there is no sign in any of the animals, is one of the mysteries that make up the great mystery of human

evolution. There are, of course, theories on the subject. One theory has been stated by Browning:—

Suppose a pricking to incontinence—  
Philosophers deduce you chastity  
Or shame, from just the fact that at the first  
Whoso embraced a woman in the field,  
Threw club down and forewent his brains beside,  
So stood a ready victim in the reach  
Of any brother savage, club in hand;  
Hence saw the use of going out of sight  
In wood or cave to prosecute his loves.  
I read this in a French book t'other day.

Another theory is advanced by Westermarck, who thinks that covering was invented in the beginning to draw attention to the sexual parts for the purpose of attracting the opposite sex, and that, when once this became customary, exceptional absence of such covering gave rise to sexual shame, so that it was not the feeling of shame that provoked the covering, but the covering that provoked the feeling of shame.

There is also the notion that the feeling of shame of nakedness arose through association of the sexual parts with the parts concerned with excretion, a notion which, however, is rendered implausible by the fact that most people see less shame in the complete exposure of the nates than in the complete exposure of the genitals. But whatever may have been the true origin of sexual shame, it is clear that the feeling of shame of all kind is aroused naturally in us all when we are found conspicuously lacking in the possessions, attributes or manners that have become common to the members of our particular group.

Among several Native tribes immemorial custom ordains that the girls must by prolonged manipulation

cause an exaggerated development of their genital parts in order thereby to be able to intensify the sexual orgasm in their husbands, and the girl who has failed to qualify herself in this respect will when she gets married know the sense of shame at her defection just the same as the European bride who is found to be seriously lacking in any of those attributes of her sex which European conventions have made necessary for her as an ordinary woman of her group or class. However improper this custom may seem to the good white women of Europe and America, the Native bride who has been delinquent in not conforming to it will, when she is found out, feel very much as the person must feel who in a community where compulsory education has been long established is found to be unable to read or write.

Thus we see that the conclusion so confidently drawn that because the Native is not ashamed of being a Native he cannot experience the feeling of shame as a white man can is not sound, inasmuch as the Native's feelings of shame are conditioned not by the conventions of the whites but by those of his own people.

And this capacity for feeling shame that is in every normal human being, is it not itself a warranty for the possession of a corresponding capacity for feeling pride individually or collectively? The collective pride called pride of race which is being propagated so furiously in parts of Europe at the present time can obviously be fully developed only where large numbers of the population are concentrated in centres wherein the organization made possible by high civilization can operate effectively, and that being so, it seems likely that so long as the Natives continue to live in separate territories with different languages and generally unconscious of any common interests opposed to those of the whites, the



feelings of collective pride and arrogance that must always lead to hostility and war can hardly grow strong among them, for which reason many white people of good will towards the Natives pray that they may forever remain without benefit of our civilization.

The militarization of black Africa by rival European powers which is already under way will probably tend to prevent for some time to come the growth of a common Native pride of race, and will provide rather opportunities for the development in the separate possessions of feelings of tribal and local pride, which feelings the several European administrators will, of course, know how to use to the advantage of their respective governments.

Not many instances, it must be admitted, can be cited with certainty of the growth of a strong national or racial pride in Africa. Still, we have the histories of the Zulus and the Matabele to show that the thing is not impossible for the African Natives even without the factor of civilized centralization. If the history of the conquering Zulus had begun, say, in the fifteenth and not, as it did, in the nineteenth century the pride which led that people to pit is united strength against the whites armed with their superior weapons might well have made possible the beginnings of an indigenous civilization of a kind never before seen in the dark continent, for those people had learned to wage organized war on their neighbours far afield, and war, as the historians tell us, is the father of all things.

Having, then, found no good reason for thinking that the Natives are by nature incapable of feeling either shame or pride in the same way or to the same extent that those feelings may be experienced by white people individually or collectively we may now pass on to

examine briefly the allegations of inability that refer to those other feelings which are commonly regarded as having been of most importance in enabling the white race to attain to its present predominance.

Although no one doubts that the Native woman is capable of feeling the natural mother's love for her young children it is commonly thought that she cannot continue to feel towards her children after they have grown up as the white mother feels towards hers. Similarly, most white people are persuaded that conjugal love as it is felt by white men and white women is beyond the reach of the Native's emotional nature. So, also, the capacity for harbouring the opposite feelings of resentment and hatred is thought to be much less in Natives than it is in Europeans or in Asiatics, and, particularly, the faculty for sustained effort of will, which the whites believe to be their special racial endowment, is held to be seriously lacking in the African race, so that, altogether, it may be said that the Natives are generally held to be constitutionally incapable of exerting the purposive and enduring emotional force which, as the whites are taught to believe, has enabled the white race to achieve its manifest supremacy.

From my own observation I am able to say that in times of serious food-shortage it happens not infrequently that a Native woman dies of starvation through stinting herself in order to give all she has of food to a grown-up son or daughter, and that she will do this quietly without expecting any praise or commendation. Can we believe that women who are capable of such selfless devotion to their grown-up children are any less truly human than the most devoted European mothers?

As for filial love in grown-up Natives it can hardly be denied that the Natives of the kraals appear to advantage



when compared with the generality of Europeans in this respect. All collectors of Native Tax in Africa will testify to the, at one time, universal practice of the young men of going away from their homes for one or more years at a time to earn money for payment of their own or their fathers' taxes, a practice which is now becoming less general with the advance of civilization so that the black youth of Africa will soon come to resemble the white youth of Europe and America in general unwillingness to support or assist parents who are in need of assistance. From this comparison we see again that in these matters it is not a difference of nature but of nurture that we observe; the primitive Native is not more inherently noble in this respect than is the civilized European; it is always a matter of varying standards and customs; in other words, it is the manners that make the men what they are, and the idealization of so-called primitive people which is done in ignorance of this fact is no more to be justified than is the all too common self-adulation of civilized people.

The supposed inability of the Natives to experience the emotion of sexual love in the rarified or romantic form of which the poets of Christendom have never ceased to sing is commonly held to be more conspicuous in the Native man than in the Native woman. Not love but lust is the feeling of which the black man is believed capable, and the difficulty of applying this distinction to the sexual relations of even the most refined of civilized Europeans is conveniently ignored. Polygamous by nature, as he is taken to be, the Native is not credited with the possession of that inexplicable faculty for falling in love with one woman only at a time which white men so frequently display. One woman, it is thought, is as good as another for the African man so long as she



is fully possessed of the physical attributes of her sex, and this, I will not deny, is true enough of the majority of Native men but I must also say that I know of many instances among untutored Natives of that undeviating passion in a man for one particular woman with which the writers of good romantic fiction have always invested their most popular heroes.

We must have due regard to the present African conditions. Growing up in an environment wherein the old restraints are being broken down before they can be replaced by the inhibitions of the new order, the Native youth is obviously not well fitted to meet the temptations to which he is exposed, particularly in the European centres where he must needs go to earn money. As a domestic servant, especially, he is often put in the way of sexual excitation through the closeness of his daily contact with the woman of the house while doing his work in her kitchen or bedroom, and when, as happens all too often, she allows herself, through carelessness or otherwise, to prolong unduly the tension so caused the strain sometimes proves too great with the result that he becomes another "case" to be quoted in support of the standing indictment against the male Native.

Not that I would deny the prevalence of sexual violence amongst the Natives in their own areas. In his home-surroundings the Native youth learns early that force, or at least a show of force, is necessary for amatory success when he finds that even the girl who has encouraged him to follow her would rather be taken by assault than be made to yield by soft persuasion, and it is when some of the girls, as taught by the missionaries, begin to insist on a gentler form of love-making more in accordance with civilized usage that the troubles occur which form so large a part of the work of the sessional

courts, but when it is remembered that not long ago the peasants of Europe behaved not very differently in this respect it is seen that there is no need to suppose a racial disposition to account for the present difference between the unschooled Natives and the civilized Europeans in Africa. It is well known, moreover, that there are men everywhere so constituted that the sexual act is for them of necessity an act of violence requiring the stimulus of real resistance to enable them to obtain full pleasure, and it has been observed also that such men are more often met with in communities where the cultural level is a low one than among people of education and culture, which shows that their presence is not to be accounted for on the grounds of race.

Speaking from my own observation I would say that lust is lust, the same thing in the black man that it is in the white, a simple, primary feeling which, like intense religious feeling, cannot concur with the comic element or with any other elemental feeling, and that this holds good for black and white men alike, but that the lust which has become so tyrannous that it cannot be held in check by either pity or fear of punishment is indicative of a condition or mentality that is not quite normal, and that this, also, applies to black and white men alike.

The fact that the condition of temporary sexual impotence, which is induced in the man by his being too anxious to acquit himself as such, is well known to the Natives goes to show that in respect of their sexual reactions to emotional inhibitions Africans are not to be racially distinguished from Europeans. Those cultured gentlemen of highly civilized France upon whose nervous frustrations in the pursuit of the gallantries of their day Montaigne discourses so pleasantly in his essay "On

the Force of the Imagination " have their counterparts among the uncivilized Natives of to-day.

For me there can be no doubt that within the whole field of sexual feeling and behaviour there is no racial difference between black and white people. The veneration of the ancients described in some of their literature, and the lechery of the moderns that is practised in all large centres of Western civilization show the same human aberrations from the purely animal ways of sexual activity that are met with in all Native communities at the present time. The attraction which female immaturity has for so many middle-aged and elderly men everywhere is certainly indulged more openly in polygamous Africa than in the ostensibly monogamous countries of Europe and America, but this is obviously not because of a different racial nature but because of different standards of propriety. The tactile stimulation afforded by the raised tattoo marks on the woman's body in tribes where such mutilation of the skin is practised serves the same purpose as the protracted osculation which the popular motion-pictures so faithfully portray for the entertainment of young and old in all civilized places. So, also, the erotic posturing that forms part of so much Native dancing serves to incite the dancers to the commission of the suggested act just as, in the opinion of a good many white people, does the rhythmic moving together of the man and the woman clasping each other in the way of European dancing, dancing which the Natives, also, when they first see it, condemn as not fit to be permitted in public. In such geographical variations of the outward manifestations and accompaniments of the sexual impulse there is clearly no evidence for the belief that African men are of a more bestial nature than white men.

Being, then, unable to find any facts to substantiate



the charge of brutish lustfulness against the Native man apart from men generally we may now turn to consider the reputation of the Native woman. She, significantly enough, is not generally held to be of a nature corresponding in its female constitution with that of the Native man who, as we have seen, is commonly credited with sexual proclivities that would seem to relate him more closely to the animals than those to be found in the white man.

Somehow, in this aspect of the popular view of the African race, the Native woman has been overlooked. I, at least, have never heard it suggested that she is not as fully endowed with the essentially human faculty for self-control at all seasons as is the white woman, and therefore equally superior to any real or supposed element of periodicity. The Native women, themselves, of course, profess to regard the man as being subject to more powerful sexual impulses than those with which the woman is provided. With them, as with the white woman, lust is viewed as a feeling more or less to be excused in a man but not to be acknowledged in a woman. Like most white women, Native women see nothing reprehensible in one of their own sex indulging her appetite for food as fully as she can afford to do but feel, as do all properly brought up white women, that in the matter of sexual satisfaction the woman must not be allowed to acknowledge a desire equal to that by which the normal and healthy man is animated.

I remember a case in which I asked the opinions of seven Native women, who had been listening to the evidence given in support of a claim for compensation for seduction, as to whether, for the purpose of assessment, I would be right in thinking that the sexual feelings of a Native woman were not as strong as those of a

Native man, and that five of these women gave the opinion, as expressed by the eldest of them, that "A woman can hold herself, a man is a man," while the other two dissented, saying to the effect that a woman's desire for a man might sometimes be too strong for her to overcome. Such diversity of opinion is not, I believe, found only among Native women, but the majority of women, black or white, would seem to be not disposed to make open claim for equality for their sex with the men in this respect.

But although the Native woman is not commonly held to be different from the women of other races in regard to the ordinary biological attributes of her sex she is nevertheless not generally considered as being capable of that continuous feeling of "pure" love for one man which white women are supposed to be able to cherish through life; her desire, it is thought, is for children of her own but not for a man of her own, seeing that, in the supposed natural condition of her race, she has always been willing to share her husband with other women.

An English trader, a man of some education, who for several years had kept a Native woman told me that as it had seemed to him that her affection for himself had been sincere and of the kind that would last he had asked her, when the time came for him to go away and leave her, as to whether she would grieve after he had gone or whether she would get herself a new man of her own kind without delay, to which she had answered that she was still too young to live without a man so that she did not think she would remain long without a husband. "They are all like that," he said, "and, after all, you can't expect them to have our finer feelings." Like most generalizations upon the subject of race this one proved to have been made upon insufficient evidence



when the man admitted that he had not had intimate knowledge of any other Native woman and that he had never kept a woman of his own colour. The reasonable conclusion would seem to be that the average Native woman is not constituted differently from the average white woman so that she will not, as a rule, remain disconsolate and single long after she has been deserted by the man whose need of her has been supplanted by other interests.

The woman who can give herself so fully to one man, whether in or out of marriage, that she cannot even think of accepting another in his place after he has left her is, we may suppose, rare in all races; she may, perhaps, even be regarded as coming within some pathological category of her own, but however she is to be regarded, her kind, as I happen to know, is also to be found among African Natives.

I recall the case of a Native girl who had become the spoilt mistress of a freehanded and indulgent white man, the owner of a small gold mine. One of his gifts to her, and the one she treasured most, was a good-sized mirror wherein she could see daily to her great satisfaction how well her shape compared with that of other women especially in the fulness of her hinder parts, the feature of female beauty so much admired by most Natives, but when, eventually, he went away and left her, well provided for though she was, she did not look again into her glass. Having often heard the Native mine-boys warned against the practice of using their teeth instead of pliers for fastening detonators to the fuses for blasting the rock in the mine she knew that if one of those bright little things was bitten hard near its top end it would explode in the mouth and cause instant death, and as she knew also where these things were



kept she stole one and bit it with the desired result. A Native who had sat with her the day after the white man had left the place told how she had moaned and said, "Now I want only to die."

If it is objected that instances such as this prove rather the presence of a morbid feeling of self-pity than capacity for enduring love of another I should not be at pains to dispute the point. General agreement as to the proper naming of the complex feelings of human beings will probably never be had. But those who have personal knowledge of the Natives in their home-surroundings will agree that, despite their traditional system of polygamy, wifely love that is both unselfish and constant is far from being uncommon among them. Indeed, to an unprejudiced observer it might well seem that the Native woman's capacity for unselfish devotion must be greater than that of the European woman, for it often happens among the uncivilized Natives that a married woman while still young and obviously attached to her man will of her own accord take trouble to induce an unmarried girl younger and more attractive than herself to become second wife in the household simply, as she will say if asked for her reason, "to make the man glad."

Where the Native woman, who feels that she has grown passé and that she is in need of female companionship and help, welcomes a younger wife for her husband one sees the motive of self-interest, but in the woman who deliberately takes the risk of being supplanted in her husband's favour simply to give him new pleasure that motive is hardly perceptible. Such complete self-elimination, however we regard it, seems to be beyond the spiritual strength of the good European wife whose marital behaviour more often suggests lust of exclusive possession than pure and unselfish love. In considering

these matters we must remember the point of view and that this has varied from time to time quite independently of the element of race as, for instance, is seen in the confession made by one of the great Mormon leaders when, toward the end of his long life he said that in his opinion the principle of plural marriage was too pure for human beings to practise in their present stage of imperfection.

Not that I would overlook the jealousy that forms the standing cause of so much cruelty and violence among the polygamous Natives. Many Native women, no doubt, resemble the great majority of white women in their desire for exclusive possession of the husband, and the fact that, as a rule, they refrain from openly cherishing it is, we may well admit, due not to any particular virtue of unselfishness on their part but to the simple need for conformity with the system of marriage in which they have grown up and have their lot.

We are too apt to forget the truth, so pertinently pointed out in the published love-letters of the most famous of modern critics, that "only on paper has humanity yet achieved glory, beauty, truth, knowledge, virtue and abiding love." Profane love, as the schoolmen called it, has been romanticized so long on paper that many people have difficulty in recognizing it for what it really is. In the light of this reflection the foregoing observations must, I think, show that the gentle feelings and tender emotions of the uncivilized Natives, however engendered, are no less gentle or tender, nor less enduring, than the feelings and emotions so named among our literate and highly civilized selves.

And now, let us consider the allegations made in respect of the Native's capacity for feeling the contrary feelings, the feelings of resentment and hate.

Throughout the centuries the African Natives have been cursed, cuffed, kicked, sometimes cruelly enslaved, always exploited and always treated with contempt by their successive overlords, white or brown, yet they have never thought of revenge, and from this it is argued that they cannot have the capacity for feeling hatred of which the peoples of Europe and Asia have given the manifold proofs that fill the pages of history. What else, it is asked, but sheer insensibility to humiliation and insult can be the cause of this long unbroken record of passive submission? It is a plausible argument, for it is true that apart from a few brief attempts at retaliation by certain tribes here and there the Africans have never made any concerted efforts to strike back at their tormentors, and even now one seldom hears of individual Natives attempting direct vengeance upon individual white men for ill-treatment suffered at their hands. But close consideration of the facts of this matter shows that there is a better conclusion to be drawn from them. The frequent crimes of arson committed in their own areas by Natives, moved solely by thirst of revenge, show clearly that the reason why such acts by Natives against whites are comparatively rare is not lack of capacity for the requisite feeling of hate. The real reason lies, of course, in the difference of status between the two peoples which serves to deter the resentful Native from wreaking open vengeance on one of the ruling race. So, also, the hopelessness of achieving collective revenge upon the whites, armed with their superior modern weapons, has long been sufficiently obvious to the Natives to prevent them from making the attempt. The desire for revenge can hardly be cherished in any human breast when it is obviously impossible to gratify that desire, but in my time I have seen so many instances of dire revenge among the



Natives themselves that I can have no doubt as to their being equally capable with Europeans of harbouring and being moved, individually and collectively, when circumstances permit, by the most essentially human of all human feelings, the feeling of hate.

What is, perhaps, the most serious of all the allegations made against the African Native is now for consideration, namely, that he is by nature so constituted as to be incapable of exercising either the individual will-power or the collective will-to-power of the white man, so that he must forever remain inferior and subordinate to his present ruler; and it must be admitted that the facts which are commonly cited in support of this allegation are in themselves hardly to be disputed.

The natural resources of Africa are no less rich or varied than those of Europe, and the climate, though hot and enervating in the greater part of the continent, is not more so than that of India, where great indigenous civilizations have flourished, while in some parts it is even cool and bracing; and, if the theory is to be accepted that civilization must always be derived from civilized people, there is the fact that the Natives of Africa have in many places been in contact with highly civilized people for long periods without any substantial change in their condition having resulted. While the whites have learned through centuries of studious labour to build the ships that now carry thousands of people at a time safely and swiftly across the stormiest ocean the blacks have not been able to improve upon the design of the dug-out. While the whites have delved into the bowels of the earth ever deeper till they have learned to bring pure air down into the deep levels of the Rand mines the blacks have not of their own accord sunk a single shaft. While the whites have erected mile-long bridges over great

waters the blacks have sat still each year on the banks of the African rivers and waited for the floods to subside. While the whites have learned to fly faster and higher than the eagle; while they have built them houses that tower into the clouds; while they have contrived the multitudinous wheels of modern industry and transport; while they have gathered the knowledge now stored in a thousand libraries; while they have done all these things the Natives have remained always idle without thought or effort.

I had been holding forth somewhat in this strain, by way of exhortation rather than reproach, at a meeting in a Native Reserve, and was turning over the implied argument in my mind while driving home in the night in my old car when suddenly the engine stopped dead of itself. At this, knowing that I had very little useful knowledge of the mechanism of a motor-car, I called to my car-boy, who had been asleep in the back seat, to get out and see what had happened, but in the darkness this proved to be not easy. Eventually, however, he discovered the break in the electrical connection that had caused the engine to stop and managed to mend it so that we were able to proceed on our journey. And, as I returned to my musing, this little incident became a parable. For it was not by my wits but by those of an almost illiterate black man that the contraption, which has now become so important a part of our modern civilization, had been made to continue the service required of it, and this man who had proved himself my superior in respect of certain knowledge essential to the continuance of that civilization was, as I knew, typical of many of our best white mechanics not only in his skill in the handling of machinery and in his keen interest in all things mechanical but even in his abiding thirst for



strong drink, an association of qualities which I had so often observed in them. Had I any reason, I asked myself, for thinking that his kind, the kind of man who is naturally of a mechanical turn of mind and as such potentially capable of inventing new machinery, would be less among the Natives than it is among ourselves, and, if not, would it not be reasonable to conclude that as the Native masses are drawn more and more into the meshes of our machine-driven civilization they will become no less efficient slaves of the machine than we who now find constant cause for pride in our inescapable servitude to that great tyrant of our own making?

The intelligent reader, who is also a student of history, may wish to say here that I should have remembered that the greatest of the civilizations of the past did not grow great through the development of mechanical means of production and transport seeing that, in comparison with ours, it was almost machineless, so that the question should be rather whether we can really believe that out of Native Africa may yet come men like those who through their capacity for great and sustained mental effort created the civilization of ancient Greece.

It must be admitted that although a not inconsiderable portion of the Native population of South Africa is now no more illiterate than the ordinary peasants of Europe of a hundred years ago there are as yet few Natives who have shown themselves possessed of sufficient will-power to acquire the education required for entry into any of the higher professions.

As yet there are only six or seven qualified Native doctors in greater South Africa, that is, less than one for each of the several millions of Native inhabitants. No Native has as yet become an architect or engineer. Only in the lower ranks of the professions of preaching



and teaching have the Natives so far found entry, and to the plain man the conclusion to be drawn from these facts is that the determination and capacity for hard study required for passing the necessary examinations are so rarely to be found in African Natives that the very few who have them must be regarded as freaks and therefore not as being representative of their race.

With few exceptions the Natives themselves feel that they have not the power of endurance needed for hard and continuous study. I have often asked the men who have come to me asking for the doctor to be sent to deliver their wives in childbirth, when the efforts of their own midwives have failed, why they have not yet seen fit to put some of their bright boys in the way of becoming qualified doctors of medicine, and they have all answered to the effect that the white doctors' learning would always be beyond their reach. One of these men, I remember, expressed himself thus: "The white man's way to become a doctor is a very long one, there are many deep rivers to be crossed, that is to say, many big books to be read; we black people get sleepy when we have to read in a book, we love sleep."

Against this large body of concurrent black and white opinion I would contend that the reasons for the admittedly conspicuous absence of civilization in Native Africa are not to be found within the mental or emotional make-up of the Natives but that those reasons must be sought in outside circumstances of history as well as in the physical and social environment in which the Natives have had their existence from the beginning, and in so contending I would claim consistency with the several theories that have been advanced from time to time to account for the genesis of civilization.

The most recently elaborated of these theories is

founded on two assumptions, first, that civilization cannot come except through hardship and struggle, so that it follows that the easier the environment the weaker the stimulus it can apply to the society within it towards civilization; and, second, that circumstances may in some places be too hard for cultural progress to be possible as, for instance, in the arctic regions.

According to another and earlier theory the origin of all civilization was the work of a particular people who in very ancient times were impelled on the banks of the Nile by certain circumstances to embark on pursuits which led inevitably to civilization. In both these theories the importance is implied of the emergence within the community of exceptional men strong enough mentally and emotionally to respond fully to whatever stimulus or challenge their particular environment may offer and in so doing carry with them the mass of the people. To account for the emergence of such men it has been suggested that they may have come into being through self-imposed and mystical seclusion for varying periods, as seen in the lives of the great leaders of mankind who, according to the legends accepted by their professed followers, withdrew from their fellow-men for various periods to acquire the power that enabled them on their return to perform the wonders that have been recorded in the several sets of holy books. Also, it has been asserted that the children of sexually cold women have large heads, giving room for an augmented nervous system as against the children of women of the opposite and presumably more natural kind who have small heads, the proffered conclusion being that civilization comes through the breeding of extraordinary children by women who are devoid of normal sexual feelings.

Apart from these more or less formulated notions is

the theory that the individual is always the product of the community but that he may by chance become a guide to it, so that all the greatest movements which have marked epochs in the checkered course of civilization may quite properly be regarded as the results of pure chance.

Although these theories differ in the emphasis they place on various factors they are, it will be seen, in agreement in not attributing to the element of race any share in the creation of civilization, and this, as the student of history will know, could hardly be otherwise. For although we may agree with Voltaire that history proves that anything can be proved by history we cannot pretend to find in it any evidence to show that the origin of civilization was the work of either pure white Nordics or pure black Negroes, seeing that the records we have point clearly to that work having been done by people who were neither of the one race nor of the other, but of intermediate or mixed breeds of the kind nowadays classed comprehensively and contemptuously by good British sailors as Dagoes.

Yet although the peoples so named are on the whole of a swarthy hue they are, as we know, white enough to be classed by anthropologists as Caucasians, the name given to the great division of human kind which must be credited with the overwhelming share of the work of creating and developing civilization during the last twenty-five hundred years, and the fact remains that the Negroes have never yet contributed anything to that accomplishment, a damning fact indeed but not, as I am here concerned to show, sufficient to prove an innate inferiority of cultural potentiality in them. For if we consider the matter closely we must, I think, conclude that the present difference between the Africans and the Europeans is not of capacity for acquiring civilization



but of degree of development as it was between the intellectual inhabitants of Greece in the days of Plato and Pericles and their ignorant and uncouth contemporaries in what is now highly civilized Northern Europe, or, again, as it was between the literate Arabs of Mediæval Spain, who cultivated high learning and bathed daily, and the Teutonic and Scandinavian peoples of that time whose very nobles were illiterate and filthy.

If then the fair-skinned Nordics, whose racial superiority has of late been so loudly proclaimed in Germany, were not able to attain to high civilization until long after it had been achieved by dark Greeks and darker Moors it would seem not unreasonable to suppose that the black Africans may yet attain to the cultural stage of their present masters.

That the physical part of the African Native's environment has always been so heavily set against cultural progress as to have made it next to impossible for any kind of primitive inhabitants, white or black, to advance from the aboriginal state without continuous compulsion from outside is a proposition for which it is not difficult to find plausible support. The African climate, it may be said, is naturally conducive to sloth; there are no cold winter-seasons to compel the people to take thought for the morrow by the building of solid shelters or by the storage of food and fuel, so that the elements of permanency of abode and private property, the main pillars in the edifice of European civilization, could not but remain lacking in Africa. Moreover, the absence of rivers navigable from the sea served to maintain isolation from civilizing influences from outside and thus helped to keep the African Native at the low cultural stage at which he was discovered by the first European travellers. If, then, it might be argued, there was never any such

reward for effort as could seem sufficient to encourage it, the natural equilibrium between the primitive Native's condition and his physical environment must have remained undisturbed so long as there was no disturbance of it from without. Apart from this deduction it would seem to be pretty well established that people, whatever their colour may be, who live in hot climates where there is little variability of temperature tend to become lazy and shiftless, whether because there is little need for activity or because they grow to find positive discomfort in activity, so that we see that the apparently inimical environment of Northern Europe, where the winters were always long and cold, was in reality conducive to the growth of civilization, whereas the apparently friendly environment of Africa could only have had the opposite effect, a consideration that is overlooked by those who talk about the Europeans having conquered their environment in contrast to the Africans who have remained in primitive subjection to theirs.

As part of the Native's physical environment must be counted the diseases which are particularly prevalent in Africa. According to some medical estimates, at least eighty per cent. of the Native population suffer from hookworm, a parasitic disease that produces an anæmic condition of the body and brain and thereby causes general lack of bodily and mental energy. Malaria, causing similar conditions, is also prevalent throughout the greater part of the continent, and the effect of these and other tropical diseases added to the enervating effect of the climate itself must always have been strongly against the inception and spread of civilization. But while we grant the probability of these conclusions we must bear in mind the danger of arguing too confidently from physical causes to cultural effects. There are races

to-day in India living under good climatic conditions in well-watered valleys whose civilization is not superior to that of the dwellers in the hot and parched plains, and the condition of the aboriginal inhabitants of South Africa who roamed over the coolest and most salubrious parts of the country was patently inferior to that of the Native invaders from the tropical regions to the North. The hoar-old practice of the African Natives of frequently changing the sites of their huts or villages to avoid imagined witchcraft from their neighbours may have served, by making permanent buildings unnecessary, to keep them at their primitive level of culture, but on the other hand may be mentioned the nomadic Arabs under the early successors of Mohammed who issued from the desert possessing no material civilization but possessed nevertheless of the character and mental culture of a civilized people.

The premised necessity for hardship as a condition precedent for the growth of civilization, also, seems a little doubtful when it is remembered that high civilizations have flourished under the comparatively easy geographical and climatic conditions that obtained in some of the centres of learning and culture in Southern Europe. Isolation, also, would seem to have been not incompatible elsewhere with advanced civilization, as we see from the instances furnished by the Mayan culture in South America.

It will be seen, therefore, that in these matters certainty is not yet possible, but although we cannot feel certain as to whether or how far the lack of high civilization in Africa is to be attributed to the Natives' physical environment we can have no doubt whatever that the force of their social environment has always



been strongly against the emergence of such a civilization in the past.

For untold centuries the worship of his ancestral spirits has enforced in the African Native unquestioned adherence to the ways and thoughts of his fathers by making the slightest attempt at deviation from those ways and thoughts an impious act not to be differentiated from witchcraft and as such to be punished with death, and although liability to that punishment is now disappearing with the spread of white civilization the fear of incurring the ill-will of the community by an appearance of non-conformity is still present and effective in the greater part of Africa to an extent that can only be realized by those who have observed these things for themselves.

To me, therefore, it has always seemed that the Native youth who of set purpose breaks away from the stranglehold of African conservatism in which he has been reared and gets himself educated as far and as well as he often does must be possessed of determination greater even than that of the poor white boy who succeeds in realizing his ambition of becoming a man of wealth or learning in a civilized country. For whereas the white boy is constantly stimulated to further effort by the envy and admiration of his fellows the black boy has no such encouragement but must preserve alone in his upward climb against resentment both from above and below. To be able thus to tear himself away from the protesting body to which he belongs by nature and tradition and to cling to that which is unwilling to receive him must obviously require a capacity for sustained effort which even the most resolute white youth might find it difficult to emulate. Such obstinacy of purpose and effort is of the sort that made the saints of the past what they were,

the same sort of thing that is nowadays called spirituality or idealism when observed by Europeans amongst themselves.

That the number of those Natives who have won to equality with well-educated Europeans is still very small is not, of course, to be denied but when we remember that where once compulsory schooling has been established it actually becomes more difficult for a person of average intelligence to avoid education than to acquire it we see that the argument from mere numbers is here of little import. And when we look back upon the society of which we are the present members do we not see that those individuals who have been able to oppose themselves to the social environment of their times and to set up new or foreign values and standards in place of the old ones have always been exceedingly few? When everything is said and done, is not each one of us to-day merely a mass-man born into a civilization which he has done nothing to create? And if our forefathers were not different from us does it not follow that they can have had no more choice in the matter of the stages of civilization they passed through than we have had in regard to the one through which we are now passing?

The fear of being separated from the herd is in all gregarious animals, including man in whom it serves to prevent not only independent individual movement but also independent individual thought. We may smile now at the learned doctor of Rouen who wrote at the time of the trial of Jeanne d'Arc, "I in no way wish to think alone," but the fear of thinking alone, like the fear of being left alone, is with us all, white and black, civilized or uncivilized, and is not incompatible even now with great learning as we see in the pathetic attempts of some of our popular scientists to reconcile the findings of

science with mass-beliefs. If we are no longer in danger of the stake for thinking differently from the majority it is still true to say in regard to our social standards of thought and action that "to be different is to be indecent," and the fear of being considered "indecent" is to-day no less an incentive to group-solidarity than was the fear of being burnt as a heretic in our more religious past.

Civilization, then, we see, is something that has come about without any conscious human will or choice; however or wherever it has originated it is a state for whose growth we Europeans of to-day cannot claim credit just as the Africans of to-day cannot be blamed for being still in their comparatively uncivilized condition, and when we observe how, in spite of the strong contrary influences of their old social environment many Natives live and labour faithfully according to European standards we can hardly believe that, as a race, their emotional or temperamental fitness for civilization can be any less than our own. That the bulk of the uncivilized Africans cannot at present react as the majority of civilized Europeans react to the emotional stimuli provided by an advanced civilization is too obvious to be questioned, but the same might have been said a few years ago of the millions of illiterate peasants of Russia who are now being brought out from their traditional state of bovine insensibility into a condition of mental and emotional awareness not different from that of the civilized inhabitants of Europe and America generally.

The difference between the manner of thinking and feeling of highly civilized Europeans and that of comparatively uncivilized Africans is of the kind that is still perceived between townsman and countryman in England, which, though it may seem fundamental is really not



so. It is the same sort of difference as that which is seen between the present manner of thinking and feeling of the German people and that of the French people; wide and deep though it may seem to opposed observers it is clearly a difference not of nature but of what is nowadays called conditioning. But the whites in Africa will not have it so. An inborn difference of mental and emotional structure must be found not only to account for the manifest cultural difference between the two races but to justify the continuation of the existing discrimination against colour. Accordingly, the plain white man in Africa learns early to protest against any thought of attempting to raise the Native up from what has come to be regarded as his natural level, the level he is "born" to occupy. Finding the Native to be, as he undoubtedly most often is, addicted to easy lying the plain white man pronounces him to be generically a "born" liar, and finding him to be also no less averse from toil than the generality of mankind when not acting under some sort of compulsion, the plain white man is led to regard all Natives as being "born" lazy. Altogether, the plain white man is assured, the Native is congenitally deficient in the moral fibre that has enabled the white race to rise supreme above the rest of mankind. This belief that certain mental or moral qualities, or the lack of such qualities, are inborn characteristics of different races or nationalities is popular with plain men everywhere. I know an English doctor, an apparently intelligent person, who seems to be genuinely convinced that whereas the Englishman is obviously born to rule the waves generally and the Natives of Africa particularly, the Welshman is born merely to be a thief. Similarly, it would appear that despite the outcome of the Great War the plain man in Germany believes that the Germans are born con-

querors and that the Jews are born parasites. Now, however the Welsh and the Jews may feel about the aspersions so commonly cast against them collectively it is certain that the African Natives as a whole do not repudiate the appraisalment of their white masters but that, on the contrary, they are only too ready to excuse themselves for their lack of civilization by saying that they have not been born to stand with the white people because they have not been given their strength. No Native has ever pretended to me to believe that it would be possible for his people to continue in the way of civilization in which they now are even for a brief period if the whites were to leave Africa, and they all regard their present inability to stand alone as an inborn deficiency which, as they say, is in the blood, and therefore not to be made good by tuition from without. Naturally enough, this general confession of inborn inferiority is accepted by the whites generally as completing the evidence of history against the possibility of equality between the two races. The histories of Haiti and Liberia are cited as bearing out the conviction shared alike by the rulers and the ruled, and the facts of environment and tradition which to the student who tries to look beneath the surface of things appear to explain the admitted backwardness of the Natives of those countries are either not known or not thought worth knowing. If, then, the great majority of white people in Africa find it easy and convenient to believe that the black man is born to remain for ever below the cultural level of the modern white man we need not wonder that the Natives as a whole, situated as they actually are so far below that level, and learning, as they do, from the white man to think as he thinks, should also find it con-



venient to profess that belief which frees them alike from effort and from blame.

Not long ago a very intelligent Native with whom I had been discussing this depreciation by the Natives of their own potential powers put the matter thus: "We black people have been stunted by God, for to us has not been given the strength that was given to the white people, therefore we must remain as we are, their dogs." It is the hoar-old excuse of those who have been found wanting in moral value, the same that is denied in the lines, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in the stars but in ourselves that we are underlings," but however the great mentors of mankind may continue to reject that excuse the tendency to "blame it on the stars" persists everywhere. The Natives, having no astrology to account for imagined synastries, put the blame for their being as they are not on the stars but on the God of whom they have been told by the missionaries, and in doing so show again the touch of human nature that makes the whole world kin.

The intelligent Native who has travelled through South Africa cannot help seeing that despite the earnest and persistent efforts of all his European well-wishers his people as a whole remain unable to approach the state of civilization and culture of the whites. He sees how nearly every attempt at Native association and organization which is not controlled or supported by white people ends in nothing but talk. Again and again he sees how the educated Native when left to himself sinks back into the shiftless African ways of least resistance. Everywhere he perceives the enormous disparity between the condition of the two races. In their Reserves the Natives remain supine and poverty-stricken, steeped in superstition and bound down by the traditional futilities of their



fathers, untouched by the strivings of the outside world; and away from the Reserves, whether in town or country, they continue the existence appointed for them of menial service and ill-paid manual labour, unmindful of the contempt of those whom they serve; ignorant and stupid and everywhere despised they remain apparently content to continue as they are, persuaded that they have not been given the power to become otherwise.

It is through seeing these things that our intelligent Native is led to agree with the general verdict of the whites concerning himself but, as we all know now, the fact that a man thinks himself inferior does not in itself prove him to be so by order of nature.

Except, perhaps, for the bucolic bastards begotten by "high-born" fathers and "low-born" mothers who must have formed part of the rural population of England in the past, the peasants, as a whole, no doubt had the sense of inferiority so well suggested in the lines:

God bless the squire and his relations  
And keep us in our proper places;

They believed sincerely enough, it would seem, that it was not the Creator's intention that they should rise to the level of their "betters"; but their descendants have since proved that personal culture is not an inborn prerogative of a particular class of people but that it is entirely a matter of individual capacity and opportunity.

The fact, then, that the great majority of the Natives believe that they are by nature unable to attain to equality with the whites is not to be taken as evidence against them but it is nevertheless a fact of importance in that it helps to explain the indifference with which, as a whole, they regard their own lowly condition.

The Native liar is no more of a "born" liar than is the white liar. All men are liars, said King David in his haste long ago, and competent English judges have of late been heard to express themselves at their leisure to the same effect. When the true-blue Englishman perjures himself to save the honour of his lady-friend he is moved by the same feeling that prompts the black African to lie to an inquisitive questioner when he considers himself justified in doing so for his own purposes. That we find so many cheerful and irresponsible liars as in fact we do find amongst the Natives whose environment has not yet made it necessary for them to cultivate the sense of personal responsibility is only to be expected. I have had to listen to many Native liars as well as to many white ones in my time, and I can see no difference between them to warrant the notion that the blacks lie more naturally than the whites; indeed it has seemed to me that the whites, being rather more sophisticated than the blacks, have been, as a rule, also more effective in their prevarications, but this advantage in the white liar the whites, we may suppose, will not wish to claim as an inborn qualification peculiar to their race but will be content to regard as a result of superior though misapplied education.

The habit of lying is a matter of time and place; it is not an inherent vice of any particular race or people. It was Bacon, the most candid of all the great English expositors of practical wisdom, who commended seasonable lying on eudemonistic grounds when he said that "A mixture of a lie does ever add pleasure" and that dissimulation and "a Power to faine, if there be no Remedy" were to be approved.

Nor is it true that the Natives are to be distinguished from the whites by being "born" lazy. Continuous and

hard manual labour is nowhere done because of an in-born desire for such labour; we know well enough that those who do it are driven to it either by direct compulsion or by economic necessity arising through fear of want or through fear of loss of the respect of their fellows, as shown not long ago in Russia where, when the "dictatorship of the proletariat" was established, it was found that the mass of the people were incurably lazy and had to be militarized and disciplined into working in accordance with the demands of the new régime. The truth of this matter has been well put by an American poet:

Driven to it  
I would slave  
From the cradle  
To the grave  
With no feeling  
Of vexation:  
Labour being  
Man's salvation

In a chain gang  
Or a galley  
I would be  
The last to dally  
But  
Left to my own devices,  
Very little work  
Suffices.

That a hot climate may conduce to the delinquency of the will to work which is so commonly observed in African Natives is hardly to be doubted; nevertheless we have already abundant proof furnished by the black



workers in the Rand mines and elsewhere in Africa that the Natives are no less able than the whites to submit themselves to the burden of hard and continuous work when the necessary incentives have been created for them.

Like the habit of lying the habit of hard work is also a matter of time and place. The English who in the past have contributed so much to the building-up of Argentine and Chili appear to be no longer in demand for pioneering in South America because, as a very competent observer was recently told by a planter in Brazil, "They've no idea of putting in a full day's work," whereas the Jews, who form a highly organised community in Entre Rios, have shown themselves capable of overcoming the aversion from manual work which has so long been regarded as an inborn characteristic peculiar to their race. Strong as the demon of accidie undoubtedly is in Africa where he has reigned undisturbed from the beginning we may yet see him being exorcized by the bells, books and candles of the new order created by necessity never known there before.

Nor, again, is there any good evidence to support the notion that the disposition to what is nowadays called emotionalism is innately stronger in Africans than it is in Europeans. That disposition, which is common to all mankind, is generally seen to wane with the spread of education unless it is being utilized as now in Germany, particularly, to further the purposes of the builders of a new state avowedly to be based on the emotions rather than on the intelligences of the people.

No one, I think, who has observed impartially the happenings of the last few years in that country can deny that the emotionalism which has produced the present generation of gullible and civically servile Germans is as primitive as any to be seen in Africa. That

the content of the German form is nationalistic and not religious like that of the American Negroes does not make it less primitive. The essence of all forms of emotion, the pugnacious, the erotic or the religious, is always the same in that it is generated through stimulation of the glands rather than through cold cerebration. Thus the emotion evoked by the rhythmic striking of the booted feet of German soldiers marching on a hard road is not essentially different from that aroused by the beating of drums in the African bush nor from that produced through the singing of plaintive "spirituals" by black congregations in the Southern States of America.

The association of the modern march with modern militarism is obviously close. All military display is at bottom emotional defence-mechanism in that it appeals to the individual's sense of fear which instinctively sees advantage in simulation of strength for the intimidating of the feared enemy and for the gaining of self-confidence all through the action of the company or group to which he belongs. Where there are no hard open roads for men to march on boldly abreast but only soft footpaths on which to shuffle along in single file the martial ardour that must needs be sustained always by collective boasting and strutting is not easily generated, but the religious fervour which in the uneducated is hardly separable from the erotic element found in us all is easily roused by singing and dancing to the rising tempo of the Native drummers as they yield to the intoxication of their own music.

Nothing has brought home to me the fact of the inner identity of black and white people more strongly than the absolute sameness of the behaviour of so many of both races when they come under the influence of the



strong religious feelings propagated by the more extravagant of modern religious sects. The antics of the various kinds of "holy rollers" in England and America are reproduced with only slight variations by their Native counter-parts in Africa. The same jerkings of the body, "speaking with tongues," prophesying, faith-healing, and all the family of signs and wonders that form the stock-in-trade of the prophets of new religions among white people are met with in Native preachers of new faiths whether imported or invented by themselves. Even in their futile efforts to explain away the obvious absurdities of their new teachings we see the same mixture of sincerity, stupidity and self-deception that we see in the similar efforts of modern proselytisers in our most civilized countries. The difference, therefore, between the white and black emotionalism is not of kind nor of degree but consists simply in the fact that the whites have learned to make theirs serve certain purposes by means of organization and propaganda as yet beyond the reach of the blacks.

But, however many unattested allegations of the kind here discussed are shown to be without good warranty in fact, the finding of so-called psychological dissimilarities, now that that adjective has become common in the mouths of the half-educated, will continue, for in the little-understood name of psychology many false inventions are daily being declared by those who know not what they say. Recently, for instance, a famous Negro singer has announced as a psychological discovery that the capacity for experiencing religious feeling is not only greater but far more common among Africans than among Europeans, and although the relevant facts to be observed at first-hand cannot be made to confirm the alleged discovery, the statement having been made by an American



Negro who, as such, is supposed to know all about his own race in Africa will, no doubt, find credence among the ever-uncritical majority of European readers.

The truth is that the majority of the Natives are like the majority of other people in that they are not disposed, as persons, to take their particular form of religion too seriously though ready enough as communities to resent violation of the places and practices they have been taught to venerate. I have watched Natives at the observances of their various religious rites in many parts of Africa and noticed among them many who showed the same signs of inner irreverence and boredom that may be seen any Sunday in numbers of those who congregate in the churches of Europe and America. Many times I have seen old Natives snigger as they watched the clumsily-performed libations of their successors at sacrificial prayers for rain which, of all their religious services, is for them the most important, and I have listened to many good-natured wranglings between them about the proper words and tunes to be used at their several religious dances which showed to me no feelings of a kind that could be described as more deeply religious than those evinced by good white Christians when occupied with the selection of ceremonial details for their religious services. On the other hand, I have also seen among these people some who gave the same appearances of religious zeal and earnestness that are met with in many both sincere and insincere worshippers in other lands. The differences of religious deportment or behaviour that I have observed have always seemed to me superficial as, for instance, the African's habit of using a loud and almost chiding tone of voice when offering his prayers to the departed spirits as compared with the

nasality that seems to be so commonly associated with sanctimoniousness among the whites.

But if we agree with those students who now describe as religious the feeling that seemed to the early missionaries in Africa so clearly one of sheer, unhallowed superstition, we may, of course, well believe the statement that the Africans are more religious than the Europeans seeing that superstition must necessarily be deeper, more general and more pervasive in Africa where illiteracy prevails than in Europe where that condition no longer exists.

Taking the words, awe, fear and reverence to stand at bottom for the element which forms, as I see it, the essence of the religious emotion, however named, I find no difference of manifestation of that essence between the ordinary folk of the two races. Although the uncivilized Natives never take in vain the name of God in the way of ribaldry or empty cursing, as is so commonly done amongst Europeans, the intrusion of anything comic into their contemplation of the Deity serves at once, as it does with devout Europeans, to dissipate, at least temporarily, the religious feeling engendered by such contemplation. The point at which the sublime and the ridiculous meet is not always the same in different languages but when that point has been suddenly touched the shock, whatever the language may be, is more or less the same to all ordinary people. I remember being shown some years ago a flat, overhanging granite rock in the veld well away from human habitation on whose hard surface there were imprints of a foot which the Natives who showed them to me professed to believe were not those of an animal nor of an ordinary human being. To me it was plain that these primitive intaglios had been made by the chipping of playful Bushmen long

vanished, but when I said so at the evening camp-fire the leader of the company who had taken me to the place demurred. No human hands, he thought, could have made those footprints, nor could they have been made by the foot of a man because no man could tread into hard rock; moreover there was the imprint of only one foot, the right.

"Who then," I asked, "made those footprints?"

"God," he answered solemnly with down-cast eyes.

After that we sat in silence for a minute or so, my informant in obvious awe at the wonder of God's footprints in the hard rock, but when I asked him if he thought it was the habit of God to hop around on one foot on a rock he saw the absurdity of the thing almost at once and guffawed. The religious feeling that had been so patently present in this untutored Native had been suddenly dispelled by a touch of the ridiculous just as so often happens to orthodox believers among white people. If, then, we find the reactions of the Native mind to certain stimuli received while in a state such as this to be exactly like those of the white man's in similar condition must we not conclude that the two minds are in this respect identically constituted?

As for those Natives who have, more or less, given up the traditions of their fathers it has often been remarked how placidly they have assumed profession of the beliefs of the missionaries of widely divergent denominations who have come among them, but here again I cannot doubt that now that the hold of the old order is being generally loosened by the spread of the new teachings there will be many among them who will make bold to claim for themselves particular possession of spiritual grace and enlightenment in the manner of European religionists at all times, and, thus pretending, will prove



that Natives also can become zealots and gossellers as hot and strong as the best of their white exemplars. With them, also, as with the people of other races, there will be the image-breakers and the law-breakers, both sets produced by the same desire to think and to behave in defiance of commonly accepted beliefs and standards of conduct. Even now, with the growth of that class-poverty which is the concomitant of high-pressure civilization everywhere, we see how many of the Natives in the greater urban areas of South Africa succeed in wrapping themselves up, as it were, more whole-heartedly than is possible for the ordinary European of to-day, in the comforting folds of the religion which, as Nietzsche declared, is the perfect slave-religion in that it offers, more forthrightly than any other, heavenly glory and power to those who have no hope of ever attaining on earth to equality with their masters. But in so doing these Natives show nothing different from the emotional behaviour of other people similarly situated. The hope of heaven has always been more ardently cherished by the poor of all races than by those who were not without hope of comfort and security on earth. So, also, the actual practice of pure religion, as defined by St. Paul, must obviously be easier for the poor of all races than for their employers, a fact recognized and well-expressed by the statesman who said of the Sermon on the Mount that he found it incompatible with every profession whereby men earn their bread; a fact, moreover, which the preacher of that sermon himself seems to have recognized when he held out no other earthly hope for the poor of his day than that they should have the gospel preached to them.

Beside the allegations of such so-called psychological differences as the one here shown to be not in accordance

with observed fact we may now also read of the discovery of a new racial difference which is being qualified by the even more recently adopted adjective, psychic. It is the difference which is alleged to consist in the endowment of the African Natives with amazing powers of telepathy, so-called, which have never yet been discovered in Europeans. And so it goes on. The belief that the black man is different inwardly as well as outwardly from the white must be maintained by the discovery of new inner differences in place of the old ones which have been shown to be not free from doubt. We must not, therefore, be surprised to hear soon that these alleged telepathic powers in the Natives are of the kind of instinctual powers that make possible the mysterious migration of birds and, as such, characteristic of an evolutionary stage lower than that attained by the white races.

Now, I have lived for many years in close association with African Natives of all kinds and conditions but I have never yet observed a single instance of the alleged ability in them to transmit news over long distances by supernatural or telepathic or other means not known to ordinary white people. On the contrary I have often been surprised that certain news of obvious interest to Natives should travel as slowly as it has done amongst them. Those accounts, moreover, of inexplicably swift communication of messages between Native communities far from each other of which I have read have seemed to me so obviously invented as to be not worth serious consideration but that will not, of course, count with those who have become possessed of the now so fashionable faith in so-called spiritualism. They will say, I suppose, that my failure to observe those wonders of which several travellers have told must be due to lack

in me of the necessary psychic power for the observation of occult phenomena, and that possibility I shall not be able to deny, seeing that I have never discovered any signs of such power in myself. I have never, for instance, had any experience of the sort that could be ascribed by those who have information of these things to the activities of a poltergeist, nor have I ever seen a ghost, black or white, and the only aura of which I know from personal experience is the good old *bouquet d'Afrique* that emanates so strongly from many Natives through their sweat. Apart from this lack of personal experience I have to confess also to inability to believe stories like that of the Indian rope-trick or those told in print and skilfully illustrated with photographs of spirits recently returned from the dead to warn or cheer their friends among the living.

Despite these disabilities I feel justified in my utter disbelief in any story which purports to show that Natives are capable of corresponding with one another over great distances by means of psychic vibrations in a way not possible for Europeans. But, as I have said, the finding of new racial differences, to be designated in the jargon of current cults, will continue, for it is here as with the belief in immortality of which it has been well said that we do not believe in immortality because we can prove it but that we continue trying to prove it because we cannot help believing in it. It is the old wishful thinking of the child in us; we like to think that we are born to reign for ever in heaven, and we like to think that we are born to be for ever the master-race on earth, inherently separate from and superior to all those who are not of our colour; but if we put away childish things—a most difficult feat even for the most grown-up people—we cannot, I think, in the light of the observations here



set down, have any reasonable doubt that the whole range of man's inner feelings and powers is as open to the African as it is to the European, neither more nor less.

Though I have searched diligently I have found in the whole gamut of human emotions of which our psychologists have made us aware no essential difference between the two races. No man, white or black, can tickle himself, but laughter is caused in both in the same way if not by the same things, and though the two may show their griefs outwardly in different manner they feel equally inwardly the sorrow of death and separation. When the Native dreams he parts, as does the white man, with the critical faculty that guides him during his waking hours though, like the white man, he may sometimes dream that he is dreaming; and when he is drunk his behaviour presents, according to individual temperament and condition, all the variations of moods seen in the white man in his several states of intoxication; the merry, the sad, the loving, the pugnacious and the rest.

So also through the whole range of feelings that motivate what we may call our moral behaviour we find the same uniformity. As, for instance, in the emotion engendered by the consciousness of the possession of respectability, the feeling so well described as the good old snob-appeal, the same that I have so often found, with Natives as with whites, to be more potent in the restraining of the so-called lower instincts than the religious feeling itself.

And if we sometimes wonder that the Natives have remained to this day without the feeling we call ambition so that even the educated ones among them have never yet attempted any concerted action in revolt against the régime of racial discrimination under which they have

their restricted and despised being, we cease to wonder at this when we remember how the great numbers of literate and organized German socialists who made themselves felt in their own country so effectively a few years ago have since been reduced to silence and impotence by their present masters by means chiefly of strong forces of police, for not only are the well-educated Natives as yet a mere handful against the great numbers of the illiterate rest of their race but they are also too scattered to be able to make themselves heard or felt to any purpose of their own. Moreover, we must remember that in the nature of things revolt is seldom, if ever, started by the depressed masses themselves but that it is started and organized by idealists among the people above who, by virtue of their acknowledged superior status, are enabled to arouse and lead those below into open and successful revolution.

And if, again, the Natives' outward mode of life is simpler than that of modern white people their attitude towards death, the final test of men, manifests no other variations than those we see in the most highly civilized Europeans. The instinct of self-preservation, we know, is common to all animals, including man, but the power to overcome that instinct by the deliberate act of self-destruction is given only to man, and in the exercise of that power, the supreme manifestation of man's specifically human nature, the Native shows himself to be completely equal to the European. Pique, shame, self-pity, the desire to cause others to regret their unkindness to oneself, and sheer weariness of life that is felt to be not worth living, all these have furnished motives for the suicides by Natives that have been enquired into before me just as they continue to do at the coroners' inquests in England; and here as there the

seemingly trivial reasons that are often assigned for the act continue to perplex the magistrates just as, on the other hand, other reasons given which in the circumstances disclosed seem entirely rational make it difficult to assume unsoundness of mind to have been the cause of the deed.

The conclusion to be drawn from these facts, which are within the knowledge of all who have shared my experience, seems to me to be clearly this, that the differences of emotional reactions, in so far as they are real, between Africans and Europeans are not due to different racial natures but to habituation and to different orientation of emotional interest induced by circumstances of environment and history.

Whether the new orientation is to be condemned or approved in the Natives is a question which itself must be answered according to the orientation of those who are asked to decide. There are now many men of good will among the whites in Africa who feel that the Natives in their uncivilized state are happier than they can ever be if forced by education and close economic pressure into the condition of the materialistic and highly competitive white civilization of to-day, and who therefore recommend that misguided missionaries and other interfering idealists should be prevented from pressing the Natives towards that fate; but against this weighty body of opinion there is the slight yet strong minority opinion of those who feel that the Natives should not be allowed to remain, as the overwhelming mass of them are, ignorant and stupid and generally inappreciative of the values which serve for the educated European to relieve life of the brutishness of mere instinctive living. But although the difference between these two views may be thus crisply stated it by no means follows that all



thoughtful white people in Africa adhere rigidly to one or the other of the two schools of thought, for thoughtful people, if they continue as such, soon come to admit that good reason is to be found in both opinions.

The fact that so many among the whites continue to concern themselves with the question of how best to do right by the Natives is a sign of grace for which I who belong to neither of the two great sections of the white population may perhaps be allowed to give thanks. And, lest it should seem from what I have already said that I have compared the Natives rather too favourably with the whites, let me say here that I am indeed very sensible of the many and serious shortcomings of the African people, as are all those who have tried to help them to move towards better things for themselves. Generally speaking, the Native is a very trying person to deal with for his soul's good or his employer's. Generally speaking, he has no desire to be improved because he sees no need for improvement in himself or in his ancestral ways. He is unmoved by the consideration that being, as he generally is, lazy, shiftless, unreliable, untruthful, irresponsible, smacking of every sin that leads to hateful inefficiency, he becomes a standing temptation to blasphemy and violence in his employer, nor has he any sympathy whatever for the good missionaries and government officials who labour to make a man of him in their own image. And, to expect that in the heat and sweat of their daily dealings with stupid and careless Natives the whites will remember always that constant efficiency may not be expected from people who have not yet come fully under the compulsion of economic necessity is to expect too much from human nature.

Considering these things, and considering also the great cultural disparity which makes it all too easy for

the white man to yield to constant temptation to abuse the power thereby placed in his hands, it speaks well of the whites generally in South Africa that the instances of serious violence by them against Natives are as few from year to year as they admittedly are.

The educated Natives are usually ready to admit that as a whole the Natives receive better treatment from the whites individually than that which the Natives themselves meted out to their own conquered peoples in the past, though these educated Natives, as I suspect, do not always recognize that the exercise of magnanimity which they approve in itself implies a denial of the equality to which they aspire. But we must beware of generalities. As the white men differ among themselves, mentally, temperamentally and emotionally, so do the Natives differ among themselves. The arguments advanced in this chapter seem to me to establish the conclusion that inborn differences of mental and emotional capacity are between man and man and not between groups or races. To me it is plain that the Natives, in so far as they seem to differ emotionally from the whites, differ not in their inward reactions to identical stimuli, but in their outward behaviour as conditioned by their environment, from which it must follow that if they were permitted to share fully without discrimination or reservation of any sort the whole environment of the whites they would become even as the whites in all future achievements of culture and civilization. Whether such equality of opportunity, which must entail absolute freedom of social intercourse and intermarriage between the two races, can ever be granted is the question to be discussed in the next chapter.

## V

### MISCEGENATION

THE love of women for which men of all ages have blessed God has never, we know, been equally free to all; almost always it has been denied to those who were considered to be too closely related by the blood of family, and now it is being denied by the white people to those who are regarded as being not sufficiently related to themselves by the blood of race. This modern restriction was not, perhaps, quite unknown in the past, for prejudice in the whites against pigment in the human skin is, no doubt, partly the result of that dislike of the unlike which would seem to be no less an essential ingredient of human nature than the attraction of the unfamiliar, but it is only with the spread of Western civilization during recent centuries that the taboo as we now know it has been developed. Our gentleman-ancestors who went out from Europe in the old spacious days to seek fame or fortune in the wide world away from their own kind appear to have been not much troubled by the considerations now being advanced by their descendants in the new-found name of race-integrity, and even to-day there are among people of education some who feel that the present intolerance of miscegenation, so called, is not to be justified by good reason, but their voices are few and feeble against the great *vox populi* which even the leaders of the Christian religion are beginning to



recognize as the voice also of God. Denunciation, therefore, of racial tolerance is now much more commonly heard in Africa than reasoned argument against it, and it goes without saying that the politicians, who are the loud-speakers of the prejudices of the electorate, are not unmindful of the duties of their calling in this respect. Thus we may hear the prime minister of Great Britain's youngest colony declare publicly that miscegenation is a disgusting offence, a statement which may be taken as a good sample of the language used in political preaching in support of the prevailing attitude because the word "disgusting" is just the one best suited to suggest that sexual intercourse between a white man and a Native woman is in itself something physically loathsome and therefore different from sexual intercourse between a white man and a white woman which even when not legalized by marriage is never so regarded. And, of course, as they well know whose business it is to foster prejudice, when the notion has once been insinuated into the vulgar mind that certain conduct is not only immoral but also unnatural, it becomes exceedingly difficult to dislodge it by argument however well reasoned. Hence one may nowadays in South Africa often hear miscegenation compared with bestiality as infamy not to be tolerated by Christians. For instance, I remember hearing a barmaid in a popular public-house declare not long ago with evident sincerity that she and all true white women regarded the white man who forsook his own race and lowered himself to have intercourse with a Native woman as being no better than the man who is convicted of the lowest form of crime, though I remember also that some of her audience, which consisted of men only, said they thought the lady protested too much on behalf of her own kind.

Of the two forms of denunciation, the prime minister's and the barmaid's, the first is the more commonly heard and also, perhaps, the more effective in that, being a flat statement authoritatively made without explanation, it avoids all appeal to the reasoning powers of those for whom it is intended, whereas the second is encumbered by the implication that the Native woman is, in comparison with her white sister, merely an animal, a comparison which even in Africa will seem odious and unacceptable to many intelligent white women.

But, as I have said, not all the condemnation of social intercourse between white and black that is commonly heard in Africa is thus starkly uttered. The other day I heard a farmer of the Afrikaans-speaking section of the white population in Rhodesia say, in the course of a discussion of the Native question generally, that he had taught his sons from infancy to be always harsh and uncivil to all Native women so as to prevent all friendliness.

"Friendliness between white and black," he declared, "is dangerous, it leads to race-mixture, and if we allow that there will soon be an end of white civilization in Africa."

This declaration of home-policy made by a respectable and not unintelligent father of a family I would cite as typical of the less impolite form of denunciation, which is also less commonly met with than the others here instanced. It received, as I observed, the entire approval of all present despite the fact that those among them who showed in complexion and features, as do so many of the whites in South Africa, strong evidence of the mixture of blood they had all there and then condemned were obviously no less civilized than those who did not. Yet, although this form of denunciation is not so uncouth as

those more commonly met with it is identical with them in that it is uttered under cover of the same supposition, namely, that Africans are inherently inferior to Europeans, and that the crossing of the two races must therefore result in a mixed race inferior to the European; and, inasmuch as this supposition has been shown, as I hope, in the foregoing chapters to be without support of good evidence, there would seem to be nothing more to be said here were it not for the further supposition that has been advanced in some quarters that because of the outward differences of the two races their mixed offspring must needs suffer under disabilities of psychological variability emergent with the new combination.

The most recent and the most authoritative pronouncement on this subject from the scientific quarter concerned is to the effect that the variability of hybrid population in the majority of such psychological tests as have been employed has not been found to be greater than that of the parent stocks. In Africa, however, the plain white man will not be disposed to pay attention to scientific pronouncements which do not support his own opinions of the matters that make up the Native problem, and he will therefore continue to repeat the hoary mistake of comparing human crossbreeds with mules despite the fact that so far from showing any signs of mule-like sterility the coloured populations of the world continue to demonstrate by their natural fecundity the inner identity of the parent races from which they spring. So, also, in spite of the fact that no racial difference of goodness or moral sensibility between Europeans and Africans can be detected, the plain white man in Africa will, on the strength of the aforesaid illegitimate comparison, continue to tell the world that the half-castes show in themselves the sin of miscegenation by inheriting all the



vices of the blacks without any of the virtues of the whites, and in thus protesting he will seek to strengthen his own chosen belief in the existence of special virtues in the white race as being transmissible only to the inheritors of its white, or nearly, white skin.

Although I am well aware that against these credenda of the plain white man's worship of his own race the denials of the unbeliever will be of little avail I will nevertheless say here for myself and for those, not a few, who have taken the trouble to observe the facts for themselves that when the coloured people as we know them in Africa are permitted to grow up and continue in an environment similar to that of the ordinary European they show themselves to be in no essential way different from the generality of white people, and that such differences as may be noticed in them from time to time are invariably seen to be differences of manner and deportment and not of any inborn disposition peculiar to them collectively as coloured people.

Whenever I have observed in a coloured person signs of such good health and bodily energy as might have seemed attributable to the so-called heterosis, or hybrid vigour, which is supposed to result from cross-breeding, especially in the first cross, I have invariably found next door, so to speak, clear instances to the contrary. So, also, I have seen no evidence of any general increase of mental powers in half-castes, no sign of the disposition to genius and to psychopathic complications which some have supposed to occur somewhat frequently as a result of human cross-breeding; the proportion of dull-wits amongst them has always seemed to me as large as it is amongst whites and blacks. The fact that so far there have been very few men of professional prominence among the coloured people in South Africa is in line

with the other evidence seeing that only a very small number of their bright youths have found it economically possible to obtain advanced education. Again, the fact that some of the prominent intellectuals of South Africa have shown signs of African blood can hardly be considered significant one way or the other seeing that thousands of white people who show such signs show none of more than ordinary intelligence. Was it not Bacon who remarked in regard to observations of this kind that it was as with men shooting at butts; they marked when they hit but not when they missed?

As to the notion so generally voiced in Africa in condemnation of race-mixture that the coloured people are by their nature more given to lawlessness and immorality than either the whites or the blacks, there is to be remembered that the great majority of the coloured inhabitants of the towns of South Africa grow up amidst temptations to crime and prostitution to which the great majorities of the other two sections of the population are not so immediately exposed, so that, having regard to their different circumstances, the incidence of crime and immorality among coloured people cannot be taken to show less capacity for good and moral living than that on which the whites pride themselves.

We see thus that no evidence of any mental or moral or biological disability is to be found in the coloured people to warrant the taboo imposed by the whites against the mating of white and black. The coming together in the way of nature of a healthy young white man and a healthy young Native woman may indeed be made sinful by the church, if they are not married, and illegal by the state, whether or not they are married, but neither of these institutions can ever make it unnatural, and therefore it can never rightly be called disgusting or beastly.

The fact that, as our farmer explained, the most powerful conditioning from infancy is found necessary to prevent friendliness between young white men and Native girls proves both the prime minister and the barmaid to have been wrong however truly they may have expressed the popular prejudice of those whom they chose to represent, and the farmer himself is proved wrong in the reason he gave for his policy by the fact that those coloured people who have been brought up in the manner of civilized people, of whom there are now a good number in South Africa, have shown themselves to be, on the whole, no less tenacious of European civilization than the generality of Europeans of to-day. All of this goes to show that the thinking, what there is of it, which goes with colour prejudice is, to say the least, confused. But if that thinking is feeble and confused the feeling which it attempts to justify is strong and certain, and growing more so every day. And, anyhow, feeling and thinking, except, perhaps, in matters mathematical, are seldom if ever to be seen as discrete functions of the mind. Here the feeling which is being so lamely served by the thinking I have mentioned prevents the thought of social equality between black and white from being calmly entertained because of the fear in every white man's heart that such equality must inevitably open the way to that sexual rivalry between white men and black men which, as I have tried to show at the beginning of this book, forms the very core of the fear-complex out of which the whole Native problem has arisen. What, therefore, we now see is a progressive hardening of the heart of white humanity less and less affected by the doubts with which the head of that great aggregate may still occasionally be visited. And in that pervasive process of induration we are all rendered more or less insensible of



the inconsistencies of our general attitude and behaviour to those Natives who have become in every way as civilized as we are. Thus few of us nowadays are conscious of the inconsistency of our protestations against the system which in India permits one section of the population to condemn another to perpetual degradation in the name of caste, while we ourselves continue in the name of race to deny social equality, the greatest blessing of modern civilization, to those whom we have taught and encouraged to ask therefor, ignoring, as we do, the fact that the barrier of caste is at least sanctioned by the religion of those who apply it, while our bar against colour is erected in crass contradiction of the religion which our state-aided missionaries compass sea and land to impose on the Natives in the name of Christ, the Son of Man.

It happened one day some years ago that I met on a railway platform in Rhodesia a young coloured woman who had been my wife's servant till some time before when she had left it to get married, and that, seeing no need to conceal my pleasure at finding her in evident good health, I shook hands with her and told her how glad I was to see her again, at which those immediately around us drew in their skirts and showed their disgust and disapproval in a manner that could hardly have been more marked had they been forced to witness an act of public indecency. But if I were to do this sort of thing now that my hair is rather more than grey, the resentment of the bystanders would not be so strong, from which the reader will see that in these mass-reactions and attitudes the element of sex plays the main rôle, a fact which is not sufficiently recognized when European members of Native welfare-societies, usually elderly people pass the immediate influence of that element,

instance the smoothness of their own social intercourse with their Native associates to show that coloured or Native people can be allowed to associate on a footing of equality with white people without danger to racial purity. The patronizing association of European ladies and gentlemen of assured position with Native or coloured people, as a rule much younger than themselves, whose patent lack of economic or social standing must necessarily make them behave always most respectfully to their obvious superiors, is a very different sort of association from that of young people of both races whose educational levels are about equal. For sex has scant respect for either wealth or race, but is always ready to listen to the old tale of love when told in the accents of a culture common to both man and maid, as Shakespeare showed in "The Moor of Venice." For this reason I think that the miscegenation of black and white will in future occur not only, as it has hitherto mostly occurred, on culturally low levels common to both parties, but also on the higher levels of college-education and general culture to which the Natives are beginning to make their way. Though the thing we call pride of race, which is of a piece with intolerance of races other than our own, might, perhaps, if it could be sufficiently cultivated among Natives living territorially separate from white people, help to preserve their separate existence, we cannot reasonably hope for such pride to be effectively cultivated in the hurly-burly of industrial competition and city life into which the Natives are now being increasingly drawn. We see among ourselves how easily the vaunted pride of the common people yields to the temptation offered through marriage or otherwise to associate on terms of equality with those recognized as belonging to a socially superior set or class; and for

the Natives, especially for the civilized Natives, the well-educated whites, the intellectuals, so called, will for a long time to come remain as superior people with whom it will be an honour for Natives to live and cohabit. Moreover, it is the people of that class or kind amongst the whites who are always much less subject to the influence of colour prejudice than the rest, obviously because their critical faculties, being more active than those of the rest, will not permit them to accept unquestioningly the new faiths of race and nationality that are now in many places replacing the more or less defunct creeds of the past. Like those who were called heretics in the hey-day of religious authority because they could not believe in all the hocus-pocus that was then universally held essential to man's salvation, the thinking men and women of to-day are not disposed to accept blindly the present doctrine that only through the preservation of the whiteness of the European skin can civilization save its soul alive.

But the great mass of the whites, we can hardly doubt, will continue to be moved unconsciously, as they now are, by the underlying fear of sex-rivalry which I have described, so that, as a race, we shall continue to be swayed by the two contrary instincts, the instinct to follow nature and the instinct to go against her, the one as natural, so to speak, as the other. For is not our civilization itself the result of a natural instinct in man to go against the instincts of his own individual nature? It would seem, therefore, that the aversion in a white community as a whole from miscegenation is no less a biological or instinctive reaction necessary for its communal existence than is the impulse which in its separate members impels them towards it. The white child, we know, has no racial feeling whatever, but wherever com-



munities of grown-up white people are confronted with the fact that its grown-up members are individually also not provided with such feeling, they invariably proceed to provide it. A good instance of this fact is furnished by the recent decision of the Italian Government to impose penalties upon those of their subjects who shall enter into relations of a conjugal nature, as the newspapers express it, with the Natives of Abyssinia. The newspaper before me at this writing says that these penalties will be imposed as a warning rather than as a punitive measure, because the Fascist Government places full reliance upon the consciousness of civil dignity and the political maturity of the Italians living in the territories of the Empire. The suppression of the ordinary person's sense of humour that is evidenced in the composition of this official warning shows again that in these matters the collective mentality of the community is, as we might say, naturally different from that of its component parts.

We see thus that mutual sexual attraction is naturally present in the individual members of the two races but that when a white community is faced with the prospect of sexual rivalry for its own women from the men of the other and subject race it develops, as if in obedience to a collective impulse or herd-instinct, a strong contrary disposition which, when rationalized into something like agreement with the generally accepted principle of fair-play, serves to prevent not only its own women from being possessed by the men of the subject race, but serves also to prevent its own men from possessing themselves of the women of that race as they would otherwise do in accordance with their individual desires. In this way, as I see it, the collective consciousness becomes the determining basis of the individual consciousness in

consonance with the individual's instinctive need for the safety of herd-existence.

This, then, is my analysis of the paradox before us, and if students of various schools of psychology find my terminology not as exact as their own, I would say that to me it seems that the obvious overlapping and interpenetration of the forces we here observe at play must always preclude complete consensus as to the proper definitions of such words as impulse, instinct, propensity and disposition. Though for our practical purposes we impose divisions between such words, we can hardly believe that the continuity of opposites which we observe in these matters can ever be adequately expressed in terms of the discrete.

We have now come to the point where we may look back and survey the mass of allegations and refutations presented in the foregoing pages. We have seen that there is no good evidence for believing the African race to be in any sense of the word inferior to the European; neither in their physical differences from the whites nor in their mental and emotional make-up, nor yet in the biological results of the miscegenation that has already occurred have we found anything to substantiate the allegation that by reason of their racial nature the African Natives can never be assimilated with and become the equals of the white people. And this being our conclusion, all the attempts that are still being made to justify attitudes of mind based on the assumptions we have here found to be untenable, now merely serve to show us that those who make them remain conscious of the need for justification of the ways of the race above to the race below. But we are not yet at the end of our examination of this matter. We now have to consider the question whether the existence itself of the apparently instinctive

prejudice in the whites against the blacks cannot, perhaps, be justified as a biological necessity of human nature regardless of the truth or falsehood of those reasons commonly used to vindicate it which we have already weighed and found wanting.

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## VI

### EPILOGUE

NOT love but enmity for all, except those of our own tribe, nation or race, is the motive power behind all human progress. Nature has endowed the different races of mankind with the spirit of antagonism to one another, as well as with different liveries of skin colour, in order that they may be separate from one another, and by so remaining continue to foster the strife for predominance whereby only she can continue to produce better and better men. So far, therefore, from condemning the prejudice which is in the great tribal heart of the white race against all other races, we should cherish it as the precious endowment of nature herself whereby only the ultimate good of all humanity can be obtained.

This theory was enunciated not long ago at one of the great universities by one of the foremost students of the sciences concerned with the subject of race, and is therefore worthy of serious consideration. If not entirely new, it presents at least a new application of an old lesson. For although the notion that the group we call a tribe was formed for combination against other similar groups is not a new one, and although, also, it is not a new thought that the group we describe as a nation was formed for combination against similar groups outside its particular territory, the idea that the very large aggregate made up of separate tribes and nations which we call a race was also formed and given

a special uniform of skin-colour for the purpose of competing against other such aggregates of people for general dominance has not, as far as I am aware, been formulated before.

But however that may be, the theory will be sure to commend itself to many of the dominant race in Africa, for it is always pleasant to be authoritatively assured that those of our actions of which we have at times had our doubts have after all been right, and in the comfort of this vindication of themselves the whites will not be disposed to ponder over the fact that the longest and most bloody wars have been fought between people of the same race and colour so alike that in order to distinguish friend from foe it became necessary to provide the contending forces with distinctive clothes and trappings.

The desire to find explanations of the apparently irrational facts of human existence and thereby justify the ways of God, or nature, to ourselves has been with us from the beginning. In the first book of the Bible we read that the Lord, having observed the building of the first monument to human concord, said: "Behold the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to. Let us go down and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."

Here the motive for the divine scattering of mankind abroad upon the face of all the earth would seem to have been apprehension of the power for progress that comes with the concentration and unification of large numbers of people, and the view of the early chronicler is thus contrary to that of the modern professor whose opinion we are considering.

Contemporary with this opinion is the contrary one expressed by a famous Egyptologist that the source of every civilization has lain in race mixture, and that when this fact has been really grasped by the eugenists in some future civilization they will carefully segregate fine races, and prohibit continual mixture till they have produced a distinct type which will start a new civilization when transplanted, so that the future progress of man may depend as much on isolation to establish a type as on fusion of types when established. This opinion, which is incongruent with either of the other two, will not, we may be sure, find favour with white people generally, even though it may be supported by analogy from the now widely known technique of the breeding of domestic animals.

If it were not that acceptance of the first-mentioned of these three theories must to some extent diminish the pleasure which the whites as a whole derive from regarding the people of other races as beings essentially inferior to themselves, that theory ought to find general favour seeing that it provides in itself complete justification of the policy of the colour bar to which the whites as a whole are now wedded. Moreover, to those who still feel ashamed at the offensiveness inseparable from all cults of nationality and race it will also commend itself, because it avoids the insult to the natives that is offered in all other attempts at justifying discrimination against them in that, by making the race-prejudice of the whites excusable and even desirable in itself, it dispenses with the need for those odious comparisons between white and black people that are continually being repeated to support the assumption of inborn inferiority in the African race.

Nor, indeed, is it difficult to find plausible arguments



for the support of the theory in itself once we have agreed to regard the large aggregate of separate nations we call a race as a mere extension of the small aggregate which we call a nation; arguments, that is to say, to show that race-prejudice is in itself a biological necessity quite independent of any intrinsic value or merit in the race which has become conscious of such prejudice. Thus, as we are told by social philosophers of the day, although man as an individual is capable of moral elevation, man in collective groups, such as tribes and nations, is a brute. And even if this appraisalment may not seem entirely sound, seeing that among the animals there is, within the species, only single combat between particular males for the possession of the females of the herd, whereas men have from the beginning fought in bands against rival bands for wives or territory, it is nevertheless true in the sense that man in the group, civilized mass-man *par excellence*, is by virtue of his greater capacity for the exercise of irrational prejudice, hatred and general enmity, the greatest brute of all. But, though we admit that in their collective antagonisms human beings are more brutal than the brutes, we must remember that it is through the mutual devotion in a band of brothers created by the need for defence against a rival band of brothers, that the master-prejudice we call patriotism is born, the complex of hate and love which has hitherto served to prod men to progress along the path of collective competition and strife, the only one we know of to that end. For, the dream of peace and goodwill to all men on earth, if it could ever be realized, would surely mean inertia, the death of the collective will, just as in the individual life of thought and undisturbed contemplation the too great knowledge of the self thereby acquired destroys the very will to live.

On this view, therefore, the view of the evolutionist whose theory we are trying to explicate, the thing called patriotism or group-loyalty is seen as an essence instilled by unerring nature unto human kind at its beginning in order that by continually extending the scope of its prejudice the group may, in the unanimity of its lively hate of all foreigners, grow ever larger and stronger. Thus we may assume that when early men began to steal women from other men they learned to fear reprisals, and thereby came to see the need for group-action in defence against those they had despoiled, and that it was in this way that group-loyalty grew out of the element of fear. But these contemporary feelings of hate and love in the heart of early man were naturally confined within small scope, and it was only when he began to appreciate the need for combination of small groups against the growing numbers of his enemies that the tribe was formed which, again, by similar process expanded into the nation. Yet although the horizon of hate and the home-circle of love were thus successively enlarged, those feelings in themselves remained unchanged, so that to this day, however well-schooled and conditioned to hate all the men outside their territories the good tribesman and the good nationalist may be, they still find it difficult not to love the women of the alien tribe or nation. And so it is even with the good racialist now being evolved; though his scope for hatred has been enlarged to include the men of all the tribes and nations of all the races apart from his own, he still finds it all too easy to love the women of those alien races.

Therefore, although it has been well said that war is the father of all things, we now see that war itself is begotten of hate and that hate springs from fear. Fear,



then, is the fecund mother of the whole brood of human feelings whereby we live and have our being, those feelings which, however variously we name them and seek to keep them distinct, will continue to get themselves mixed up in our minds. And the birthplace of fear we have found to be in the region of consciousness that is controlled by sex. So it has always been, but inasmuch as all the races that are not white have now come under the white man's ban of hate, the evolution we have here traced would seem to have reached its earthly limit, and the end of human progress might thus be seen to be near, were it not that there remains the large home-field of the white race itself for cultivation of international fear, with its all-important by-product of hate, which feelings are, indeed, being produced continually throughout the great countries of Europe to-day.

At the present time, also, the numbers of those who profess belief in the need for perpetual hostility are greater, and the noise of their preachment is louder than ever before. Millions of white people are being exhorted to worship only the folk-soul, the dynamic principle behind all progress; to cast away the outmoded ideological lumber of the past and to learn to think only with their blood when they think about the purpose of their own collective being. And for this modern preachment the highest ancient authority may be claimed, for although the verbal violence now in vogue in enlightened Germany was not favoured by the thinkers of antiquity, the principle that enmity, regardless of its cause or occasion, is in itself a necessary condition for the progress of the world was fully recognized by them, thus, five hundred years before Christ, the philosopher, Heraclitus, since whom nothing wholly new in philosophy has been declared, pronounced his finding: "All things



are just in the sight of God: Men conceive some to be unjust and some to be just, all things come into being and pass away through strife."

More scientifically expressed but to the same effect is the opinion we get from one of our greatest living thinkers. Freud, in answer to a question from Einstein, said the other day that it seemed to him that the instincts of hate and destruction were as necessary as those that conserve and unify; as if a principle of polarity were involved, seeing that an instinct of either category could operate but rarely in isolation, which would mean that war, being an easy outlet for the destructive impulses, would be exceedingly hard to abolish. Many, indeed, of the philosophers have voiced the same thought, among them Hegel, who believed that all nature was an objective expression of consciousness, and who therefore regarded all natural development as a struggle of opposites. To those of us, therefore, who have found solace in the study of philosophy these reflections are not unfamiliar. While I was yet a young man I was led to the conclusion that human society could continue only as a process of establishing brief periods of balance between warring groups animated by their conflicting emotions and desires, though I, too, when still younger, had had the vision of a day when the injustice of inequality should be removed from the earth.

Loyalty to one's own country or race, then, as we here see, can exist only as the result of prejudice against those outside that country or race. Such prejudice, therefore, fulfils a deep-seated need of our nature, for most men find life dull and meaningless unless they can see in it something bigger than themselves, in which fact lies the undeniably attractive mysticism of war, war being the culmination of a passion which is, perhaps,

more generally entertained to-day than when the mysticism of religion was more generally felt. In these things civilization has brought no inward change. The majority of civilized men at the present time are no less ready to sacrifice comfort and security for the satisfaction of taking part in any intensive common activity, such as war, than are the most primitive savages, so called, who rub their bellies in unison and dance out their war-dance to make themselves "feel good" before they set out to fight against their tribal rivals similarly prepared.

So apparently necessary to the continuation of collective humanity are the factors of inequality and strife that even the great spokesman for Christianity, the religion that might seem to imply denial of that necessity, may be quoted in support of the general verdict of history and philosophy. St. Augustine, the greatest of the fathers of the Church, confessed his belief that to the end of history the peace of the world must be gained by strife, and this confession is implicit in the teaching of the founder of Christianity himself as when he said that it must needs be that offences come, and afterwards declared: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword." This prophecy, we know, has been fulfilled many times through the cause of hostility furnished by the dividing of men into rival bands of believers, which division we may suppose to be not necessarily excluded from the scope of the theory before us. Many other biblical texts may be cited for the sanctioning of the principle which that theory seeks to uphold. Thus we may go on to argue that just as, in the words of Christ, "The Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force," so also equality on earth cannot be bestowed as an act of grace on any set of human beings,

but must be won through the unassisted efforts of those who desire it. So, also, we may apply the lesson of the unused talents to the race which has given proof in the past of its lasting lack of interest in aught but its own immediate belly-needs, the race which, but for the few of its members who have been stirred by the whites to discontent with their racial status, would fain continue undisturbed in its age-long stupor of sloth.

Biblical confirmation can, of course, always be had for the most contrary sects and schools of thought. The gods, as Anatole France observed, always conform scrupulously to the sentiments of their worshippers. Slavery in its cruellest form seemed not inconsistent with the religion of the New Testament to the generation which produced men like John Newton, who, while on his way from the Gold Coast to America with a cargo of black slaves lying chained in the hold of his ship, wrote the hymn beginning:

How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

In a believer's ears:

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,

And drives away his fears.

and to this day, though they are no longer prepared to condone absolute slavery, the great majority of the white members of the Christian Churches in Africa see no contradiction of their creed in permitting their racial prejudice to make impossible all equality, political or social, between whites and Natives, however clean, Christian and civilized the Natives may be. Even the Christian missionaries, as a whole, find this attitude conformable with the teaching which it is their business to spread, seeing, as they do, no explicit warrant in the



Sermon on the Mount or elsewhere in the Bible for the vision, which their forerunners attempted to realize, of a Christian community embracing both black and white without distinction. Like the rest of the whites, they accept the argument that political equality cannot be permitted without thereby paving the way for social equality, and that social equality cannot continue without miscegenation, wherefore the present racial prejudice of the whites must by all means be upheld. I, at least, have never met a white missionary who was prepared to accord full social equality, with all that it implies, to any Native, however eligible for such privilege he might appear to be. The modern missionaries do not pretend to be differently constituted from other white men in the matter of racial rivalry, and they, therefore, prefer to accept the interpretation of Holy Writ that will enable them to behave like the rest of their race with a good conscience. To the so-called acid-test as applied in the question: "Would you allow your sister or daughter to marry a Native?" the white missionary reacts as does every white man. Even if he is persuaded that the clean and cultured black man is in every sense of the word as worthy as the clean and cultured white man, the white missionary yet cannot resist the prejudice of the race to which he belongs and from which he cannot separate himself.

Recently I discussed this aspect of the Native problem with a typical missionary of the modern sort. I asked him if he was not disturbed by the fact that in educating the Natives we were creating in them a sensitiveness to offence and insult similar to our own, so that they would feel the sting of our refusal to accord them social equality with ourselves much more keenly than the raw Natives now feel the insult of the blows and abuse they

frequently receive from their white masters in the course of their more or less menial employment.

"God," he replied, "has made the races different. It would be wrong for me to allow any Native man, however well educated he might be, to associate on a footing of equality with my daughter seeing that I could not allow any intimacy. The Natives must learn to recognize that there can never be social equality between them and us."

A most honest man he was, for when I asked him if he did not think that the cumulative effect of continuous wounding of the feelings of the educated Natives would result in serious inter-racial hatred he did not proceed to postulate the growth of such a racial pride in them as should render them insensitive to the daily slight inseparable from the denial of true social intercourse with the whites. All that he could say was that whatever the result might be, social equality between white and black could not be allowed.

Honesty, as we have all been taught, is always the best policy. It was against the dishonest men who preached what they were not prepared to practise that Jesus hurled his strongest condemnation in language of the utmost violence. Better, the modern missionary would say, to avow frankly our unwillingness, come what may, to abate our racial feelings than to pretend to honour a utopian doctrine of theoretical egalitarianism which our daily acts must necessarily belie, and in so saying he would ally himself with the Colonial prime minister who said recently that it had not been sufficiently clearly stated in England that until human nature is absolutely changed the white man will not accept the Native as an equal, socially or politically.

We see, then, that the theory which justifies the race

prejudice of the whites as an indispensable constituent of collective human existence may be supported by good testimony not only from science and philosophy but also from the Christian religion as professed, particularly by those concerned with the teaching of it to the Natives. That the white, or nearly white, adherents of Islam do not openly confess racial prejudice against their black fellow-believers is not, I think, so much because the racial affinity of olive-skinned Mohammedans with Africans is less remote than that of the pure-white members of the various Christian Churches as because of the fact that, unlike the professed followers of Christ, the followers of the Prophet still, as a whole, cherish a hatred of all infidels strong enough to engender among them a true tolerance of colour in all of their own faith, in which circumstance we see again an illustration of the truth that collective love and tolerance can be bred and nourished only by fear and hatred of real or imagined enemies without.

If, then, we can never dispense with the need for collective hate, the only way to put an end to the strong race-hatred of to-day would be to resuscitate and substitute for it that great collective passion which animated the world during past centuries, the hatred of heretics who, as such, are the natural enemies of the faithful of all races; a sorry change, perhaps, but apparently the only possible one, seeing that nature will not permit elimination of collective hatred but will only tolerate the substitution of one form of it for another within her established order.

All this we may say, and more also, and yet not feel that we have made an end of the matter. For the best-laid arguments in defence of the prejudice upon which the policy of the colour bar is founded seem, somehow, not



entirely sufficient to satisfy the feeling we call our social conscience, that strange faculty for collective self-criticism whose psychological identity has not yet been certainly established. And though it is true that within the actual realm of collective passion the faculty for self-criticism can seldom function freely it is equally true that once we have won so far as to be able to question the justice of particular acts of such passion we cannot easily get away from the voice of conscience counselling compromise and moderation.

The first legislation which the whites passed in Africa to prevent themselves from ill-treating the Natives was obviously prompted by nothing nobler than fear of provoking the hostility of superior numbers. "If anyone," so ran van Riebeeck's proclamation, "ill-treat a Native or beat or push him—no matter whether he be in the right or not—he shall receive in the presence of the aggrieved Native, 50 lashes, so that the Natives may be made to understand that the deed has been done against our will, and that we desire to associate with them in all kindness and amity . . . ."

The governor made no pretence of love for the Natives whom he described as dull, stupid and odorous, he only recognized the importance of avoiding the enmity of the blacks against whose numbers his own were too few; his apparent solicitude was therefore not inspired by what we would ordinarily call conscience. To-day, however, it would almost seem as if we had acquired, collectively if not individually, something like a capacity for experiencing a disinterested human feeling, if such a thing can be imagined, seeing that the social conscience by which many of us are often disturbed is obviously not caused by the fear of the Natives who are now patently unable to challenge the power of the white

man's rule, and seeing, also, that that feeling has not been provoked by any articulate protest or appeal from their side, inasmuch as, apart from the comparatively few who have been taught by us to worry themselves about these things, the Natives have never thought of questioning the rightness of our refusal to treat them as our equals.

Not that in this respect there is much difference to be seen between the attitudes of the two races in Africa to-day and the respective behaviour of the dominant and subject peoples or classes of other times and places, for the underlings of whatever tint of skin have seldom, if ever, had it in them to question of their own accord the right of the power-holding section to insist on the maintenance of the established political and social inequality, but have been content to wait until certain members of that section felt moved to come down and teach them to feel the collective discontent which is the beginning of all upward social movement.

Now, however, that the belief is no longer current, or seriously held, that only the inculcation of a particular creed can save immortal souls of heathen Natives from eternal confinement in limbo or in hell, many thoughtful people are perplexed by questions which to their parents seemed not worth considering in comparison with the all-important matter of the soul's salvation which, as they argued, was being brought to the knowledge of the Natives through the spread of Christian civilization. The question with which the social conscience of many of the present generation of thoughtful people is concerned is not only whether it is right to deny equality to the Natives but also whether it is right to press upon them the civilization whose benefits seem to many of the whites themselves too heavily paid for by the sum

total of its unavoidable griefs and burdens. Is it right, people now ask themselves, to continue the present process of substituting for the natural African contentment the feverish and unnatural discontent of the high-pressure machine civilization of the whites with all its inescapable frustration and mass misery? Ought we not rather to prevent that change from coming about seeing that the Natives themselves fear it, realizing, as they do, that it is at variance with the environment in which they have been evolved, and for which only they feel themselves to be well fitted?

These are some of the questions posed by our social conscience to which questions most of us can only answer that unless real separation of the two races can be enforced and maintained we shall be no more able to prevent the impending change in Africa than our ancestors in Europe were able to prevent the successive stages of civilization through which they passed. Indeed, so far from regarding ourselves as the creators and controllers of the civilization we call our own we feel that we have been trapped by it into our present condition of mechanical and irrational necessity, so that unless it should still be possible for us at this eleventh hour to place the Natives for good and all outside the reach of the power by which we ourselves are now being driven ever faster in an unknown direction, we shall not be able to prevent them from suffering the worst part of our fate. In other words, we apprehend that without much more thorough separation of the two races than is now practised in South Africa the Natives must inevitably be drawn into our system wherein, by reason of the handicap of our prejudice under which they must needs continue to labour, they will be relegated to the lowest and least desirable



level of our civilization, and thereby suffer degradation greater than any they have yet known.

And here it is that our perplexity is increased as we try to give heed to two conflicting voices: the one of our social conscience warning us against the sin of closing the door of equal opportunity against the people for whom we cannot, or will not, allow adequate separate territory, and the other bidding us in the name of the common sense of self-preservation to remember the danger of losing our racial integrity and with it our cultural heritage through allowing that door to remain open. Nor, strangely enough, does it seem possible for us to escape entirely from this perplexity by silencing both those voices with the fiat of the great prejudice of race which, as we are most authoritatively assured, is an indispensable provision of nature for the recreation of mankind through eternal strife regardless of all ethical values and questionings. Somehow, we cannot for long get away from our preoccupation with the old question: And who is my neighbour? For to that question there is yet no certain answer. The answer given in the parable of the Good Samaritan, though it is accepted as binding all good white Christians to succour equally all who are sick and wounded in body regardless of race or colour is not held to imply that they may not continue to wound the feelings of their civilized black neighbours as they now do daily by enforcing the rule of the white man's colour bar.

As a hospital nurse a white woman may serve continually in close physical contact with male Native helpers and patients, and be honoured for her service, but should she allow herself to be treated by a Native man, however respectable and civilized he might be, in the way of friendship that implies social equality, she will, if detected,

be driven with dishonour from her place. Even the professional association of European nurses with a fully qualified Native doctor is prohibited by the universal taboo. For so this prejudice against the African male may now well be called seeing that it is not confined to Africa but is openly displayed in countries where the fear of unfair economic competition cannot be alleged as even to a small extent excusing the presence of a colour bar. Among the white millions of London, for instance, the small number of black students and visitors attracted thither by the lure of the great city can have no possible economic significance, yet the proprietors of respectable boarding-houses in London now refuse to open their doors to respectable black men however well accredited they may be. In England as in Africa white men cannot abide the sight of black men being together with white women, and it is this collective jealousy in white men, and not any apprehension of unfair labour or trade competition which in both places leads to the same result. Unless, therefore, this fact, the cardinal fact of the whole Native question, is fully recognized by those who criticize the policy of the colour bar in Africa their criticism, however well-intended, can have no real value.

Notwithstanding, then, that there is in the minds of many the perplexity I have described, it would seem that on the whole the social conscience of the whites is steadily accommodating itself to the actual order which now quite openly precludes the possibility of social equality between the two races. As a whole we are moving away from the faith which Olive Schreiner declared when she wrote :

“ It is the deep conviction buried somewhere in our nature, not to be eradicated, that man as man is a great and important thing, that the right to himself

and his existence is the incontestable property of all men; and above all the conviction that not only *we* have a right and are bound to preserve it for ourselves, but that where we come into contact with others *we are bound to implant it or preserve it in them*. It is a profound faith, not in the equal talent, virtue and abilities of men, but in the equal right of the poorest, most feeble, most ignorant to his own freedom and to a perfect equality of treatment . . .”

Voices such as this are indeed still to be heard here and there pleading for equal opportunities and equal status for all civilized men irrespective of the colour of their skin or the shape of their features, but the mass of the whites do not hearken to them. The declaration of the belief that all men are created equal that rang out from the New World a hundred and fifty years ago is seldom voiced publicly to-day—an English Bishop recently described it as a resounding falsehood—and in its stead we hear continually quotation of the modern political leader’s famous pronouncement: “The White man is determined to do all he can to remain and, what is more, to rule. This matter is to us in South Africa such a vital and fundamental matter that no ethical considerations such as the rights of man, will be allowed to stand in the way.” The fact that cultural inequality does not prove the existence of radical inequality is seldom recognized; the actual inequality between the two races is so strikingly patent that only serious reflection will show the possibility of it not being the result of congenital inferiority in the mass of the African people. Moreover it is seen that in order to preserve the present inequality indefinitely it would not be necessary to use any active measures to prevent the spread in Africa of the



education required to bring about a general change but that all that would be required would be for the whites to refrain from pressing their education upon the Natives who, as a whole, have no desire to escape from their age-old state of cultural inferiority of which they may be conscious but of which they are certainly not ashamed.

This fact, which I have already adumbrated, should also be borne in mind by those who have criticism to offer against the prevailing attitude of the whites in Africa towards the blacks. So persistent has been the reluctance of the Natives as a race to change from their own traditional care-free condition to that of the whites, and so sad has seemed the loss of Native contentment which must result from such a change, that many thinking people have been brought to the conclusion that, in fairness to the Natives, the compulsion, direct or indirect, which must be used to bring about cultural equality between the two races, ought, if possible, to be avoided.

The die-hard equalitarian may, indeed, taunt those professed democrats who confess such feelings with being recreant to the high ideal of their political faith, but his vision of a beneficent civilization embracing democratically all races of men for their common advancement is, somehow, no longer possible for the generality of white people. Although the political orator is loudly applauded when he speaks of the atmosphere of equality as the breath of South African life, and of the fluid, mobile society of that country where there are no upper classes and no sacrosanct superior persons to hinder the people from moving freely up and down, his all-white audience is fiercely resolved never to allow a black man, however civilized he may be, to breathe the atmosphere of that society. High and low, good and bad, all whites alike are determined not to

tolerate any assumption of social equality between themselves and the Native people. The good churchgoer and the godless gaolbird are equally against associating on a footing of equality with black men within the churches or prisons in which they themselves respectively are gathered together. Racial segregation is demanded no less by those who have incurred the displeasure of their own society than by those who are regarded as the pillars of its traditional morality.

Several South African newspapers published the other day a protest made at a Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church against the exposure of the body that is permitted for white women at the seaside resorts of the country. The protestant, a minister of the church, was not going any longer, so the report read, to see "the moral blood of the daughters of his nation sucked by preying eyes irrespective of colour." The qualification contained in the last three words of this somewhat turbid sentence does not, of course, refer to the colour of the preying or prying eyes but to the colour of the skin of the owners of those eyes. It is in utterances such as this, which one may frequently hear blurted out at public meetings, that the true nature of the motive behind the policy of the colour bar is revealed. The indignant predikant here quoted undoubtedly voiced the feelings of the whites in South Africa as a whole: white women must always be entirely inviolate from black and coloured men. Had this man been asked to defend the colour bar as being necessary to prevent the comparatively high standard of living of the white workers from being lowered by the free competition of the simple-living Native workers he would perhaps have refused to do so seeing that the religion whose servant he is recommends frugality and simple living for all, but, having perceived the danger of lust

being roused by women of his own race in men not of his own race, his feelings of collective jealousy, which are older and stronger than the consciousness of universal brotherhood, got the better of the holy conscience of his calling, and he was moved to utter the protest that plainly showed his anxiety for the inviolability of white women to be greater than his concern for the preservation of their sense of modesty.

In writing this book it has not been my purpose to attempt a comprehensive answer to the Native question. My purpose has been simply to show that there are no racial or congenital characters of inferiority in the Native people of Africa to furnish justification for the policy or attitude comprehended under the name of Colour Bar, so that if such justification exists it must be found in elements outside those that constitute the body and soul of the Native himself.

It is obvious that it is only by removing the misconceptions of the real nature of our motives and prejudices in regard to the Native question that the truth of the matter can be reached but it is not so certain that men as tribes or nations can live by truth only, seeing that hitherto they seem to have lived and grown great collectively not by truth or reason alone but by every prejudice that proceeds out of the depths of man's irrational human nature. Unless, therefore, it is possible for human nature to change it would seem profitless to attempt to substitute truth for the prejudice that fosters the qualities of assertiveness and aggressiveness which appear to be essential to tribal and national progress.

But even if we cannot believe that human nature can ever be changed we may yet cherish the hope that the present habit of regarding all black or brown people as inherently inferior to ourselves may be to some extent



lessened by testimony such as here set down and by the increase of the numbers of Natives who shall reach and establish themselves on our cultural level. This, of course, will take time. Long-continued habit, we know, becomes second nature, and the number of whites who are ready to testify as I have done in these pages is still very small, as is also the number of those Natives who are able and willing to demonstrate the capacity of their race for high cultural development.

And, all things considered, we cannot wonder that this habit should persist as it does. Without education there can be no cultural advance, and the measure of education given to the Natives, as compared with that given to the whites in Africa, is naturally very small. For, just as in his day Aristophanes thought the Athenians had become knavish with the new learning so the white man in Africa thinks education spoils the Native and makes him useless to the State which, therefore, is not required to make the measure of education equal for both races. Moreover, human nature being what it is, we can hardly expect those who have great power over others to relinquish it without a struggle, nor can we expect the Natives to go on struggling hard to become educated equally with the whites seeing that those who have become so educated are not allowed to make use of their knowledge or skill in the European centres where only a demand for these things exists.

Above all there is the fact that the whites simply do not want to rid themselves of the habit whereby they avoid questionings concerning the fairness of their attitude towards the subject race such as, for instance, the question whether it is fair to prevent Natives from competing against whites in any but the lowest and worst-paid forms of employment. For, although the

lowering of the colour bar tends temporarily to lower the standard of living of the white workers we know well enough that the Natives are no less fond of ease and luxury than other people, so that if they are given the same wages as the whites receive they will soon acquire the same standard of living for themselves as that to which the white workers have now attained. The habit or fashion of regarding the Native people as inherently unequal with the whites avoids this kind of questioning by ignoring the very possibility of equality and thus affords a comfort which the whites as a whole will be slow to deny themselves.

It is in these facts and circumstances, and not in any postulated inferiority in the Natives as a whole, that the reason, if not the justification, for the policy of the colour bar is to be seen. Territorial and industrial separation of the two races in Africa, commonly called segregation, is clearly the only practicable policy to-day seeing that, rightly or wrongly, the whites will have none other, and seeing also that the Natives as a whole are not eager to escape from their present condition of racial subjection. That it is not in accordance with Christian ethics to differentiate against ethnic groups different from our own, as the Jews did against the Samaritans, is a permissible and pertinent argument, though Christ himself expressed no unequivocal opinion on the subject perhaps because he also recognized the necessity for permitting certain practices and attitudes of mind even though they were contrary to the religious ideals of his race as when, in answering the pharisees' question whether it was lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause he said: Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

The ideal of human equality regardless of race now seems farther away from being realized than ever it was; the hardness of the hearts of the white men of to-day makes any attempt to demonstrate the rightness of that ideal in a practical way an act of treason against the white race not to be forgiven.

A man whom I met in the train near Cape Town recently told me how by going straight against what he felt to be right and just he had been kept from committing the unforgivable sin. He said that when his wife died, some three years before, he had got a housekeeper, a slightly coloured woman, to look after his home and two children, and that he had found her so capable and so good in every way that if it were not for fear of what his children would say when they grew up he would certainly have married her. She was, he said, the finest woman he had ever known: she kept the home spick and span, the children were happy, she was always ready to do her best for him without a word of complaint. "I reckon," he concluded, "that, colour or no colour, she is a woman that any working man might be proud to call his wife—but if I did go and marry her what would my children say to me afterwards? No . . . I could not face them."

Is it not true that when we come to face the actualities of life we who are white and civilized do even as the primitive savages? We do not bow ourselves before the high God who requires from us only that we should do justly and love mercy; we bow ourselves humbly before the society to which we belong.

As never before the whites in South Africa are becoming obsessed with the idea of race purity; it is the vision without which, as they continually tell themselves, they will surely perish, and their elders and spokesmen,



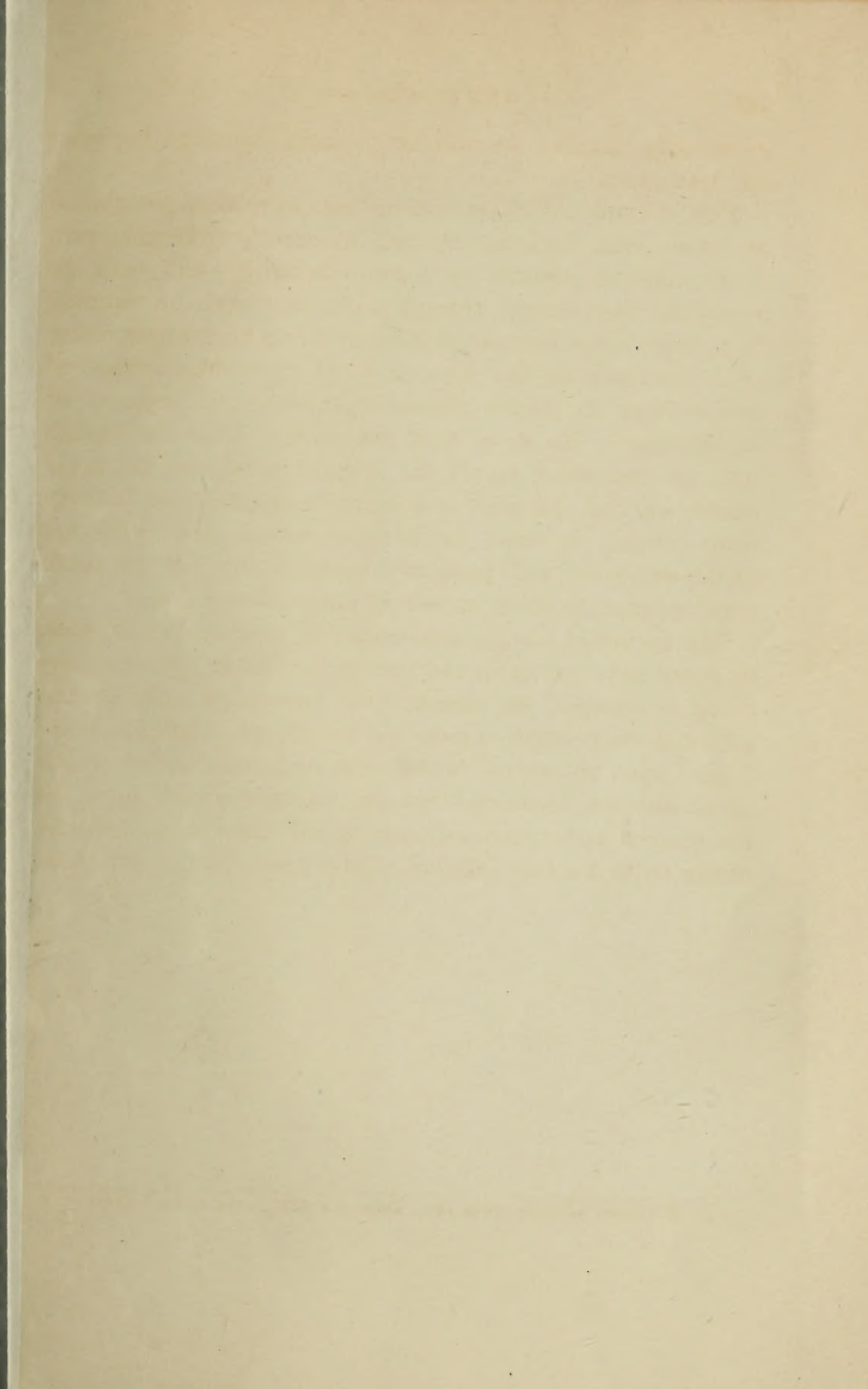
in and out of parliament, now openly proclaim it to be their duty to implant colour prejudice into the souls of all their fellow South Africans for which endeavour the spirit of what is called the Calvinistic attitude is invoked by those who recognize the value of a semblance of religious sanction.

And yet in spite of all this fostering of colour prejudice in high places there is little direct cruelty in the general treatment of the Natives. Instances of sadistic violence do, of course, occur from time to time, but of that insensate collective cruelty that has caused the revolting crime of lynching to continue in parts of America there has so far been no instance in South Africa. From old Natives who remembered the invasion of their territory by Africans better organized than themselves I have often heard tales of dreadful cruelty suffered at the hands of the black invaders after they had established themselves as the superior caste, but I have never heard of any such deeds having been committed in times of peace by either Dutch or English settlers. The general demeanour of the whites towards the Natives has hitherto varied only from one of mere indifference to one of kindly contempt, and, naturally enough, the passibility of the people who have been accustomed from childhood to that sort of attitude must, on the whole, be of low degree. It is only in those Natives, yet comparatively few, who have been taught to feel what otherwise they would hardly have been able to feel that feelings of resentment are now beginning to appear. The only form of collective cruelty, therefore, with which the whites can be fairly charged is the cruelty that lies in encouraging primitive men to learn the arts and crafts of civilization and then to refuse to let them practise in competition with white men what they have learnt, lest by so doing they should

eventually succeed in enforcing social equality between the two races.

Few, I think, of those readers who have been persuaded to agree that Africans are not inherently different from Europeans in mental or moral capability will seek to repudiate that charge though some may well be tempted to palliate the substance of it by pointing to the possibility of a lowering of the general level of white civilization and culture in Africa through a too rapid process of assimilation. To deny that possibility would be foolish but, on the other hand, the danger must not be over-estimated, for although considerable numbers of Natives have already become dwellers in towns and cities the great majority will probably continue to live in small rural groups as their ancestors have always done.

The future is always uncertain; to many it seems dark in every sense of the word for the whites in Africa. One thing is certain: we cannot have too much light on the grave matters with which we are faced. In this book I have tried to analyse in the light of reason and close observation the elemental human feelings which must be recognized and reckoned with by all those who honestly desire to find a fair solution of the great Native problem.







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